ON HORSEBACK

IN VIRGINIA ETC...

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ON HORSEBACK

A TOUR IN VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA, AND TENNESSEE

WITH NOTES OF TRAVEL IN MEXICO AND CALIFORNIA

BY

CHARLES DUDLEY WARNER

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
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ON HORSEBACK.

ON HORSEBACK.

I.

"THE way to mount a horse" — said the Professor.

"If you have no ladder" — put in the Friend of Humanity.

The Professor had ridden through the war for the Union on the right side, enjoying a much better view of it than if he had walked, and knew as much about a horse as a person ought to know for the sake of his character. The man who can recite the tales of the Canterbury Pilgrims, on horseback, giving the contemporary pronunciation, never missing an accent by reason of the trot, and at the same time witch North Carolina and a strip of East Tennessee with his noble horsemanship, is a kind of Literary Centaur of whose double instruction any Friend of Humanity may be glad to avail himself.

"The way to mount a horse is to grasp the

mane with the left hand holding the bridle-rein, put your left foot in the stirrup, with the right hand on the back of the saddle, and" —

Just then the horse stepped quickly around on his hind feet, and looked the Professor in the face. The Superintendents of Affairs, who occupy the flagging in front of the hotel, seated in cane-bottomed chairs tilted back, smiled. These useful persons appear to have a life-lease of this portion of the city pavement, and pretty effectually block it up nearly all day and evening. When a lady wishes to make her way through the blockade, it is the habit of these observers of life to rise and make room, touching their hats, while she picks her way through, and goes down the street with a pretty consciousness of the flutter she has caused. The war has not changed the Southern habit of sitting out-of-doors, but has added a new element of street picturesqueness in groups of colored people lounging about the corners. There appears to be more leisure than ever.

The scene of this little lesson in horsemanship was the old town of Abingdon, in Southwest Virginia, on the Virginia and East Tennessee railway; a town of ancient respectability, which gave birth to the Johnstons and Floyds and other notable people, a town that still preserves the flavor of excellent tobacco and

something of the easy-going habits of the days of slavery, and is a sort of educational centre, where the young ladies of the region add the final graces of intellectual life in moral philosophy and the use of the globes to their natural gifts. The mansion of the late and left Floyd is now a seminary, and not far from it is the Stonewall Jackson Institute, in the midst of a grove of splendid oaks, whose stately boles and wide-spreading branches give a dignity to educational life. The distinction of the region is its superb oak-trees. As it was vacation in these institutions of learning, the travelers did not see any of the vines that traditionally cling to the oak.

The Professor and the Friend of Humanity were about starting on a journey, across country southward, through regions about which the people of Abingdon could give little useful information. If the travelers had known the capacities and resources of the country, they would not have started without a supply train, or the establishment of bases of provisions in advance. But, as the Professor remarked, knowledge is something that one acquires when he has no use for it. The horses were saddled; the riders were equipped with flannel shirts and leather leggins; the saddle-bags were stuffed with clean linen, and novels, and son-

nets of Shakespeare, and other baggage, — it would have been well if they had been stuffed with hard-tack, for in real life meat is more than raiment.

The hotel, in front of which there is cultivated so much of what the Germans call *sitz-fleisch*, is a fair type of the majority of Southern hotels, and differs from the same class in the North in being left a little more to run itself. The only information we obtained about it was from its porter at the station, who replied to the question, "Is it the best?" "We warrant you perfect satisfaction in every respect." This seems to be only a formula of expression, for we found that the statement was highly colored. It was left to our imagination to conjecture how the big chambers of the old house, with their gaping fireplaces, might have looked when furnished and filled with gay company, and we got what satisfaction we could out of a bygone bustle and mint-julep hilarity. In our struggles with the porter to obtain the little items of soap, water, and towels, we were convinced that we had arrived too late, and that for perfect satisfaction we should have been here before the war. It was not always as now. In colonial days the accommodations and prices at inns were regulated by law. In the old records in the court-house we read

that if we had been here in 1777 we could have had a gallon of good rum for sixteen shillings; a quart bowl of rum toddy made with loaf sugar for two shillings, or with brown sugar for one shilling and sixpence. In 1779 prices had risen. Good rum sold for four pounds a gallon. It was ordered that a warm dinner should cost twelve shillings, a cold dinner nine shillings, and a good breakfast twelve shillings. But the item that pleased us most, and made us regret our late advent, was that for two shillings we could have had a "good lodging, with clean sheets." The colonists were fastidious people.

Abingdon, prettily situated on rolling hills and a couple of thousand feet above the sea, with views of mountain peaks to the south, is a cheerful and not too exciting place for a brief sojourn, and hospitable and helpful to the stranger. We had dined — so much, at least, the public would expect of us — with a descendant of Pocahontas; we had assisted on Sunday morning at the dedication of a new brick Methodist church, the finest edifice in the region, a dedication that took a long time, since the bishop would not proceed with it until money enough was raised in open meeting to pay the balance due on it, — a religious act, though it did give a business aspect to the

place at the time; and we had been the light spots in the evening service at the most aristocratic church of color. The irresponsibility of this amiable race was exhibited in the tardiness with which they assembled: at the appointed time nobody was there except the sexton; it was three quarters of an hour before the congregation began to saunter in, and the sermon was nearly over before the pews were at all filled. Perhaps the sermon was not new, but it was fervid, and at times the able preacher roared so that articulate sounds were lost in the general effect. It was precisely these passages of cataracts of sound and hard breathing which excited the liveliest responses, — "Yes, Lord," and "Glory to God." Most of these responses came from the "Amen corner." The sermon contained the usual vivid description of the last judgment-ah, and I fancied that the congregation did not get the ordinary satisfaction out of it. Fashion had entered the fold, and the singing was mostly executed by a choir in the dusky gallery, who thinly and harshly warbled the emotional hymns. It occupied the minister a long time to give out the notices of the week, and there was not an evening or afternoon that had not its meetings, its literary or social gathering, its picnic or fair for the benefit of the church,

its Dorcas society, or some occasion of religious sociability. The raising of funds appeared to be the burden on the preacher's mind. Two collections were taken up. At the first, the boxes appeared to get no supply except from the two white trash present. But the second was more successful. After the sermon was over, an elder took his place at a table within the rails, and the real business of the evening began. Somebody in the Amen corner struck up a tune that had no end, but a mighty power of setting the congregation in motion. The leader had a voice like the pleasant droning of a bag-pipe, and the faculty of emitting a continuous note like that instrument, without stopping to breathe. It went on and on like a Bach fugue, winding and whining its way, turning the corners of the lines of the catch without a break. The effect was soon visible in the emotional crowd: feet began to move in a regular cadence and voices to join in, with spurts of ejaculation; and soon, with an air of martyrdom, the members began to leave their seats and pass before the table and deposit their contributions. It was a cent contribution, and we found it very difficult, under the contagious influence of the hum from the Amen corner, not to rise and go forward and deposit a cent. If anything could extract the pennies from a

reluctant worldling it would be the buzzing of this tune. It went on and on, until the house appeared to be drained dry of its cash; and we inferred by the stopping of the melody that the preacher's salary was secure for the time being. On inquiring, we ascertained that the pecuniary flood that evening had risen to the height of a dollar and sixty cents.

All was ready for the start. It should have been early in the morning, but it was not; for Virginia is not only one of the blessed regions where one can get a late breakfast, but where it is almost impossible to get an early one. At ten A. M., the two horsemen rode away out of sight of the Abingdon spectators, down the eastern turnpike. The day was warm, but the air was full of vitality and the spirit of adventure. It was the 22d of July. The horses were not ambitious, but went on at an easy fox-trot that permits observation and encourages conversation. It had been stipulated that the horses should be good walkers, the one essential thing in a horseback journey. Few horses, even in a country where riding is general, are trained to walk fast. We hear much of horses that can walk five miles an hour, but they are as rare as white elephants. Our horses were only fair walkers. We realized how necessary this accomplishment is, for be-

tween the Tennessee line and Asheville, North Carolina, there is scarcely a mile of trotting-ground.

We soon turned southward and descended into the Holston River Valley. Beyond lay the Tennessee hills and conspicuous White-Top Mountain (5530 feet), which has a good deal of local celebrity (standing where the States of Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina corner), and had been pointed out to us at Abingdon. We had been urged, personally and by letter, to ascend this mountain, without fail. People recommend mountains to their friends as they do patent medicines. As we leisurely jogged along we discussed this, and endeavored to arrive at some rule of conduct for the journey. The Professor expressed at once a feeling about mountain-climbing that amounted to hostility, — he would go nowhere that he could not ride. Climbing was the most unsatisfactory use to which a mountain could be put. As to White-Top, it was a small mountain, and not worth ascending. The Friend of Humanity, who believes in mountain-climbing as a theory, and for other people, and knows the value of being able to say, without detection, that he has ascended any high mountain about which he is questioned, — since this question is the first one asked about

an exploration in a new country, — saw that he should have to use a good deal of diplomacy to get the Professor over any considerable elevation on the trip. And he had to confess also that a view from a mountain is never so satisfactory as a view of a mountain, from a moderate height. The Professor, however, did not argue the matter on any such reasonable ground, but took his stand on his right as a man not to ascend a mountain. With this appeal to first principles, — a position that could not be confuted on account of its vagueness (although it might probably be demonstrated that in society man has no such right), — there was no way of agreement except by a compromise. It was accordingly agreed that no mountain under six thousand feet is worth ascending; that disposed of White-Top. It was further agreed that any mountain that is over six thousand feet high is too high to ascend on foot.

With this amicable adjustment we forded the Holston, crossing it twice within a few miles. This upper branch of the Tennessee is a noble stream, broad, with a rocky bed and a swift current. Fording it is ticklish business except at comparatively low water, and as it is subject to sudden rises there must be times when it seriously interrupts travel. This

whole region, full of swift streams, is without a bridge, and, as a consequence, getting over rivers and brooks and the dangers of ferries occupy a prominent place in the thoughts of the inhabitants. The life necessarily had the "frontier" quality all through, for there can be little solid advance in civilization in the uncertainties of a bridgeless condition. An open, pleasant valley, the Holston, but cultivation is more and more negligent and houses are few and poorer as we advance.

We had left behind the hotels of "perfect satisfaction," and expected to live on the country, trusting to the infrequent but remunerated hospitality of the widely scattered inhabitants. We were to dine at Ramsey's. Ramsey's had been recommended to us as a royal place of entertainment, the best in all that region; and as the sun grew hot in the sandy valley, and the weariness of noon fell upon us, we magnified Ramsey's in our imagination, — the nobility of its situation, its cuisine, its inviting restfulness, — and half decided to pass the night there in the true abandon of plantation life. Long before we reached it, the Holston River which we followed had become the Laurel, a most lovely, rocky, winding stream, which we forded continually, for the valley became too narrow much of the way to accommodate a

road and a river. Eagerly as we were looking out for it, we passed the great Ramsey's without knowing it, for it was the first of a little settlement of two houses and a saw-mill and barn. It was a neat log house of two lower rooms and a summer kitchen, quite the best of the class that we saw, and the pleasant mistress of it made us welcome. Across the road and close to the Laurel was the spring-house, the invariable adjunct to every well-to-do house in the region, and on the stony margin of the stream was set up the big caldron for the family washing; and here, paddling in the shallow stream, while dinner was preparing, we established an intimacy with the children and exchanged philosophical observations on life with the old negress who was dabbling the clothes. What impressed this woman was the inequality in life. She jumped to the unwarranted conclusion that the Professor and the Friend were very rich, and spoke with asperity of the difficulty she experienced in getting shoes and tobacco. It was useless to point out to her that her *al fresco* life was singularly blessed and free from care, and the happy lot of any one who could loiter all day by this laughing stream, undisturbed by debt or ambition. Everybody about the place was barefooted, except the mistress, including the

comely daughter of eighteen, who served our dinner in the kitchen. The dinner was abundant, and though it seemed to us incongruous at the time, we were not twelve hours older when we looked back upon it with longing. On the table were hot biscuit, ham, pork, and green beans, apple-sauce, blackberry preserves, cucumbers, coffee, plenty of milk, honey, and apple and blackberry pie. Here we had our first experience, and I may say new sensation, of "honey on pie." It has a cloying sound as it is written, but the handmaiden recommended it with enthusiasm, and we evidently fell in her esteem, as persons from an uncultivated society, when we declared our inexperience of "honey on pie." "Where be you from?" It turned out to be very good, and we have tried to introduce it in families since our return, with indifferent success. There did not seem to be in this family much curiosity about the world at large, nor much stir of social life. The gayety of madame appeared to consist in an occasional visit to paw and maw and grandmaw, up the river a few miles, where she was raised.

Refreshed by the honey and fodder at Ramsey's, the pilgrims went gayly along the musical Laurel, in the slanting rays of the afternoon sun, which played upon the rapids and

illumined all the woody way. Inspired by the misapprehension of the colored philosopher and the dainties of the dinner, the Professor soliloquized: —

> "So am I as the rich, whose blessed key
> Can bring him to his sweet up-locked treasure,
> The which he will not every hour survey,
> For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.
> Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
> Since seldom coming, in the long year set,
> Like stones of wealth they thinly placèd are,
> Or captain jewels in the carcanet."

Five miles beyond Ramsey's the Tennessee line was crossed. The Laurel became more rocky, swift, full of rapids, and the valley narrowed down to the river-way, with standing room, however, for stately trees along the banks. The oaks, both black and white, were, as they had been all day, gigantic in size and splendid in foliage. There is a certain dignity in riding in such stately company, and the travelers clattered along over the stony road under the impression of possible high adventure in a new world of such freshness. Nor was beauty wanting. The rhododendrons had, perhaps, a week ago reached their climax, and now began to strew the water and the ground with their brilliant petals, dashing all the way with color; but they were still matchlessly beautiful. Great banks of pink and white covered the

steep hillsides; the bending stems, ten to twenty feet high, hung their rich clusters over the river; avenues of glory opened away in the glade of the stream; and at every turn of the winding way vistas glowing with the hues of romance wrenched exclamations of delight and wonder from the Shakespearean sonneteer and his humble Friend. In the deep recesses of the forest suddenly flamed to the view, like the splashes of splendor on the sombre canvas of an old Venetian, these wonders of color, — the glowing summer-heart of the woods.

It was difficult to say, meantime, whether the road was laid out in the river, or the river in the road. In the few miles to Egger's (this was the destination of our great expectations for the night) the stream was crossed twenty-seven times, — or perhaps it would be more proper to say that the road was crossed twenty-seven times. Where the road did not run in the river, its bed was washed out and as stony as the bed of the stream. This is a general and accurate description of all the roads in this region, which wind along and in the streams, through narrow valleys, shut in by low and steep hills. The country is full of springs and streams, and between Abingdon and Egger's is only one (small) bridge. In a region with scarcely any level land or intervale, farmers

are at a disadvantage. All along the road we saw nothing but mean shanties, generally of logs, with now and then a decent one-story frame, and the people looked miserably poor.

As we picked our way along up the Laurel, obliged for the most part to ride single-file, or as the Professor expressed it, —

> "Let me confess that we two must be twain,
> Although our undivided loves are one," —

we gathered information about Egger's from the infrequent hovels on the road, which inflamed our imaginations. Egger was the thriving man of the region, and lived in style in a big brick house. We began to feel a doubt that Egger would take us in, and so much did his brick magnificence impress us that we regretted we had not brought apparel fit for the society we were about to enter.

It was half past six, and we were tired and hungry, when the domain of Egger towered in sight, — a gaunt two-story structure of raw brick, unfinished, standing in a narrow intervale. We rode up to the gate, and asked a man who sat in the front-door porch if this was Egger's, and if we could be accommodated for the night. The man, without moving, allowed that it was Egger's, and that we could probably stay there. This person, however, exhib-

ited so much indifference to our company, he was such a hairy, unkempt man, and carried on face, hands, and clothes so much more of the soil of the region than a prudent proprietor would divert from raising corn, that we set him aside as a poor relation, and asked for Mr. Egger. But the man, still without the least hospitable stir, admitted that that was the name he went by, and at length advised us to "lite" and hitch our horses, and sit on the porch with him and enjoy the cool of the evening. The horses would be put up by and by, and in fact things generally would come round some time. This turned out to be the easy way of the country. Mr. Egger was far from being inhospitable, but was in no hurry, and never had been in a hurry. He was not exactly a gentleman of the old school. He was better than that. He dated from the time when there were no schools at all, and he lived in that placid world which is without information and ideas. Mr. Egger showed his superiority by a total lack of curiosity about any other world.

This brick house, magnificent by comparison with other dwellings in this country, seemed to us, on nearer acquaintance, only a thin, crude shell of a house, half unfinished, with bare rooms, the plastering already discolored.

In point of furnishing it had not yet reached the "God bless our Home" stage in crewel. In the narrow meadow, a strip of vivid green south of the house, ran a little stream, fed by a copious spring, and over it was built the inevitable spring-house. A post, driven into the bank by the stream, supported a tin wash-basin, and here we performed our ablutions. The traveler gets to like this freedom and primitive luxury.

The farm of Egger produces corn, wheat, grass, and sheep; it is a good enough farm, but most of it lies at an angle of thirty-five to forty degrees. The ridge back of the house, planted in corn, was as steep as the roof of his dwelling. It seemed incredible that it ever could have been ploughed, but the proprietor assured us that it was ploughed with mules, and I judged that the harvesting must be done by squirrels. The soil is good enough, if it would stay in place, but all the hillsides are seamed with gullies. The discolored state of the streams was accounted for as soon as we saw this cultivated land. No sooner is the land cleared of trees and broken up than it begins to wash. We saw more of this later, especially in North Carolina, where we encountered no stream of water that was not muddy, and saw no cultivated ground that was not washed.

The process of denudation is going on rapidly wherever the original forests are girdled (a common way of preparing for crops), or cut away.

As the time passed and there was no sign of supper, the question became a burning one, and we went to explore the kitchen. No sign of it there. No fire in the stove, nothing cooked in the house, of course. Mrs. Egger and her comely young barefooted daughter had still the milking to attend to, and supper must wait for the other chores. It seemed easier to be Mr. Egger, in this state of existence, and sit on the front porch and meditate on the price of mules and the prospect of a crop, than to be Mrs. Egger, whose work was not limited from sun to sun; who had, in fact, a day's work to do after the men-folks had knocked off; whose chances of neighborhood gossip were scanty, whose amusements were confined to a religious meeting once a fortnight. Good, honest people these, not unduly puffed up by the brick house, grubbing away year in and year out. Yes, the young girl said, there was a neighborhood party, now and then, in the winter. What a price to pay for mere life!

Long before supper was ready, nearly nine o'clock, we had almost lost interest in it.

Meantime two other guests had arrived, a couple of drovers from North Carolina, who brought into the circle — by this time a wood-fire had been kindled in the sitting-room, which contained a bed, an almanac, and some old copies of a newspaper — a rich flavor of cattle, and talk of the price of steers. As to politics, although a presidential campaign was raging, there was scarcely an echo of it here. This was Johnson County, Tennessee, a strong Republican county; but dog-gone it, says Mr. Egger, it 's no use to vote; our votes are overborne by the rest of the State. Yes, they 'd got a Republican member of Congress, — he 'd heard his name, but he 'd forgotten it. The drover said he 'd heard it also, but he did n't take much interest in such things, though he was n't any Republican. Parties is pretty much all for office, both agreed. Even the Professor, who was traveling in the interest of Reform, could n't wake up a discussion out of such a state of mind.

Alas! the supper, served in a room dimly lighted with a smoky lamp, on a long table covered with oil-cloth, was not of the sort to arouse the delayed and now gone appetite of a Reformer, and yet it did not lack variety: corn-pone (Indian meal stirred up with water and heated through), hot biscuit slack-baked

and livid, fried salt-pork swimming in grease, apple-butter, pickled beets, onions and cucumbers raw, coffee, so-called, buttermilk, and sweet milk when specially asked for (the correct taste, however, is for buttermilk), and pie. This was not the pie of commerce, but the pie of the country, — two thick slabs of dough, with a squeezing of apple between. The profusion of this supper staggered the novices, but the drovers attacked it as if such cooking were a common occurrence, and did justice to the weary labors of Mrs. Egger.

Egger is well prepared to entertain strangers, having several rooms and several beds in each room. Upon consultation with the drovers, they said they 'd just as soon occupy an apartment by themselves, and we gave up their society for the night. The beds in our chamber had each one sheet, and the room otherwise gave evidence of the modern spirit; for in one corner stood the fashionable æsthetic decoration of our Queen Anne drawing-rooms, — the spinning-wheel. Soothed by this concession to taste, we crowded in between the straw and the home-made blanket and sheet, and soon ceased to hear the barking of dogs and the horned encounters of the drover's herd.

We parted with Mr. Egger after breakfast (which was a close copy of the supper) with

more respect than regret. His total charge for the entertainment of two men and two horses — supper, lodging, and breakfast — was high or low, as the traveler chose to estimate it. It was $1.20: that is, thirty cents for each individual, or ten cents for each meal and lodging.

Our road was a sort of by-way up Gentry Creek and over the Cut Laurel Gap to Worth's, at Creston Post-Office, in North Carolina, — the next available halting place, said to be fifteen miles distant, and turning out to be twenty-two, and a rough road. There is a little settlement about Egger's, and the first half mile of our way we had the company of the school-mistress, a modest, pleasant-spoken girl. Neither she nor any other people we encountered had any dialect or local peculiarity of speech. Indeed, those we encountered that morning had nothing in manner or accent to distinguish them. The novelists had led us to expect something different; and the modest and pretty young lady with frank and open blue eyes, who wore gloves and used the common English speech, had never figured in the fiction of the region. Cherished illusions vanish often on near approach. The day gave no peculiarity of speech to note, except the occasional use of "hit" for "it."

The road over Cut Laurel Gap was very

steep and stony, the thermometer mounted up to 80°, and notwithstanding the beauty of the way the ride became tedious before we reached the summit. On the summit is the dwelling and distillery of a colonel famous in these parts. We stopped at the house for a glass of milk; the colonel was absent, and while the woman in charge went after it, we sat on the veranda and conversed with a young lady, tall, gent, well favored, and communicative, who leaned in the doorway.

"Yes, this house stands on the line. Where you sit you are in Tennessee; I 'm in North Carolina."

"Do you live here?"

"Law, no; I 'm just staying a little while at the colonel's. I live over the mountain here, three miles from Taylorsville. I thought I 'd be where I could step into North Carolina easy."

"How 's that?"

"Well, they wanted me to go before the grand jury and testify about some pistol-shooting down by our house, — some friends of mine got into a little difficulty, — and I did n't want to. I never has no difficulty with nobody, never says nothing about nobody, has nothing against nobody, and I reckon nobody has nothing against me."

"Did you come alone?"

"Why, of course. I come across the mountain by a path through the woods. That 's nothing."

A discreet, pleasant, pretty girl. This surely must be the Esmeralda who lives in these mountains, and adorns low life by her virgin purity and sentiment. As she talked on, she turned from time to time to the fireplace behind her, and discharged a dark fluid from her pretty lips, with accuracy of aim, and with a nonchalance that was not assumed, but belongs to our free-born American girls. I cannot tell why this habit of hers (which is no worse than the sister habit of "dipping") should take her out of the romantic setting that her face and figure had placed her in; but somehow we felt inclined to ride on further for our heroine.

"And yet," said the Professor, as we left the site of the colonel's thriving distillery, and by a winding, picturesque road through a rough farming country descended into the valley, — "and yet why fling aside so readily a character and situation so full of romance, on account of a habit of this mountain Helen, which one of our best poets has almost made poetical, in the case of the pioneer taking his westward way, with ox-goad pointing to the sky: —

"'He 's leaving on the pictured rock
His fresh tobacco stain.'

"To my mind the incident has Homeric elements. The Greeks would have looked at it in a large, legendary way. Here is Helen, strong and lithe of limb, ox-eyed, courageous, but woman-hearted and love-inspiring, contended for by all the braves and daring moonshiners of Cut Laurel Gap, pursued by the gallants of two States, the prize of a border warfare of bowie knives and revolvers. This Helen, magnanimous as attractive, is the witness of a pistol difficulty on her behalf, and when wanted by the areopagus, that she may neither implicate a lover nor punish an enemy (having nothing, this noble type of her sex, against nobody) skips away to Mount Ida, and there, under the ægis of the flag of her country, in a Licensed Distillery, stands with one slender foot in Tennessee and the other in North Carolina" —

"Like the figure of the Republic itself, superior to state sovereignty," interposed the Friend.

"I beg your pardon," said the Professor, urging up Laura Matilda (for so he called the nervous mare, who fretted herself into a fever in the stony path), "I was quite able to get the woman out of that position without the aid of a metaphor. It is a large and Greek idea, that of standing in two mighty States, supe-

rior to the law, looking east and looking west, ready to transfer her agile body to either State on the approach of messengers of the court; and I 'll be hanged if I did n't think that her nonchalant rumination of the weed, combined with her lofty moral attitude, added something to the picture."

The Friend said that he was quite willing to join in the extremest defense of the privileges of beauty, — that he even held in abeyance judgment on the practice of dipping; but when it came to chewing, gum was as far as he could go as an allowance for the fair sex.

> "When I consider everything that grows
> Holds in perfection but a little moment" —

The rest of the stanza was lost, for the Professor was splashing through the stream. No sooner had we descended than the fording of streams began again. The Friend had been obliged to stipulate that the Professor should go ahead at these crossings, to keep the impetuous nag of the latter from throwing half the contents of the stream upon his slower and uncomplaining companion.

What a lovely country, but for the heat of noon and the long wearisomeness of the way! — not that the distance was great, but miles and miles more than expected. How charming the open glades of the river, how refreshing

the great forests of oak and chestnut, and what a panorama of beauty the banks of rhododendrons, now intermingled with the lighter pink and white of the laurel! In this region the rhododendron is called laurel, and the laurel (the sheep-laurel of New England) is called ivy.

At Worth's, well on in the afternoon, we emerged into a wide, open farming intervale, a pleasant place of meadows and streams and decent dwellings. Worth's is the trading centre of the region, has a post-office and a sawmill and a big country store; and the dwelling of the proprietor is not unlike a roomy New England country-house. Worth's has been immemorially a stopping place in a region where places of accommodation are few. The proprietor, now an elderly man, whose reminiscences are long *ante bellum*, has seen the world grow up about him, he the honored, just centre of it, and a family come up into the modern notions of life, with a boarding-school education and glimpses of city life and foreign travel. I fancy that nothing but tradition and a remaining Southern hospitality could induce this private family to suffer the incursions of this wayfaring man. Our travelers are not apt to be surprised at anything in American life, but they did not expect to find a house

in this region with two pianos and a bevy of young ladies, whose clothes were certainly not made on Cut Laurel Gap, and to read in the books scattered about the house the evidences of the finishing schools with which our country is blessed, nor to find here pupils of the Stonewall Jackson Institute at Abingdon. With a flush of local pride, the Professor took up, in the roomy, pleasant chamber set apart for the guests, a copy of Porter's Elements of Moral Science.

"Where you see the Elements of Moral Science," the Friend generalized, "there 'll be plenty of water and towels;" and the sign did not fail. The friends intended to read this book in the cool of the day; but as they sat on the long veranda, the voice of a maiden reading the latest novel to a sewing group behind the blinds in the drawing-room; and the antics of a mule and a boy in front of the store opposite; and the arrival of a spruce young man, who had just ridden over from somewhere, a matter of ten miles, gallop, to get a medicinal potion for his sick mother, and lingered chatting with the young ladies until we began to fear that his mother would recover before his return; the coming and going of lean women in shackly wagons to trade at the store; the coming home of the

cows, splashing through the stream, hooking right and left, and lowing for the hand of the milker, — all these interruptions, together with the generally drowsy quiet of the approach of evening, interfered with the study of the Elements. And when the travelers, after a refreshing rest, went on their way next morning, considering the Elements and the pianos and the refinement, to say nothing of the cuisine, which is not treated of in the text-book referred to, they were content with a bill double that of brother Egger, in his brick magnificence.

The simple truth is that the traveler in this region must be content to feed on natural beauties. And it is an unfortunate truth in natural history that the appetite for this sort of diet fails after a time, if the inner man is not supplied with other sort of food. There is no landscape in the world that is agreeable after two days of rusty bacon and slack biscuit.

"How lovely this would be," exclaimed the Professor, "if it had a background of beefsteak and coffee!"

We were riding along the west fork of the Laurel, distinguished locally as Three Top Creek, — or rather we were riding in it, crossing it thirty-one times within six miles; a charming wood (and water) road, under the

shade of fine trees, with the rhododendron illuminating the way, gleaming in the forest and reflected in the stream, all the ten miles to Elk Cross Roads, our next destination. We had heard a great deal about Elk Cross Roads; it was on the map, it was down in the itinerary furnished by a member of the Coast Survey. We looked forward to it as a sweet place of repose from the noontide heat. Alas! Elk Cross Roads is a dirty grocery-store, encumbered with dry-goods boxes, fly-blown goods, flies, loafers. In reply to our inquiry, we were told that they had nothing to eat, for us, and not a grain of feed for the horses. But there was a man a mile further on, who was well to do and had stores of food, — old man Tatem would treat us in bang-up style. The difficulty of getting feed for the horses was chronic all through the journey. The last corn crop had failed, the new oats and corn had not come in, and the country was literally barren. We had noticed all along that the hens were taking a vacation, and that chickens were not put forward as an article of diet.

We were unable, when we reached the residence of old man Tatem, to imagine how the local superstition of his wealth arose. His house is of logs, with two rooms, a kitchen

and a spare room, with a low loft accessible by a ladder at the side of the chimney. The chimney is a huge construction of stone, separating the two parts of the house; in fact, the chimney was built first, apparently, and the two rooms were then built against it. The proprietor sat in a little railed veranda. These Southern verandas give an air to the meanest dwelling, and they are much used; the family sit here, and here are the wash-basin and pail (which is filled from the neighboring spring-house) and the row of milk-pans. The old man Tatem did not welcome us with enthusiasm; he had no corn, — these were hard times. He looked like hard times, grizzled times, dirty times. It seemed time out of mind since he had seen comb or razor, and although the lovely New River, along which we had ridden to his house, — a broad, inviting stream, — was in sight across the meadow, there was no evidence that he had ever made acquaintance with its cleansing waters. As to corn, the necessities of the case and pay being dwelt on, perhaps he could find a dozen ears. A dozen small ears he did find, and we trust that the horses found them.

We took a family dinner with old man Tatem in the kitchen, where there was a bed and a stove, — a meal that the host seemed to

enjoy, but which we could not make much of, except the milk; that was good. A painful meal, on the whole, owing to the presence in the room of a grown-up daughter with a grave-yard cough, without physician or medicine, or comforts. Poor girl! just dying of "a misery."

In the spare room were two beds; the walls were decorated with the gay-colored pictures of patent-medicine advertisements — a favorite art adornment of the region; and a pile of ancient illustrated papers with the usual patent-office report, the thoughtful gift of the member for the district. The old man takes in the Blue Ridge Baptist, a journal which we found largely taken up with the experiences of its editor on his journeys roundabout in search of subscribers. This newspaper was the sole communication of the family with the world at large, but the old man thought he should stop it, — he did n't seem to get the worth of his money out of it. And old man Tatem was a thrifty and provident man. On the hearth in this best room — as ornaments or *memento mori* — were a couple of marble grave-stones, a short head-stone and foot-stone, mounted on bases and ready for use, except the lettering. These may not have been so mournful and significant as they looked, nor the evi-

dence of simple, humble faith; they may have been taken for debt. But as parlor ornaments they had a fascination which we could not escape.

It was while we were bathing in the New River, that afternoon, and meditating on the grim, unrelieved sort of life of our host, that the Professor said, "Judging by the face of the Blue Ridge Baptist, he will charge us smartly for the few nubbins of corn and the milk." The face did not deceive us; the charge was one dollar. At this rate it would have broken us to have tarried with old man Tatem (perhaps he is not old, but that is the name he goes by) over night.

It was a hot afternoon, and it needed some courage to mount and climb the sandy hill leading us away from the corn-crib of Tatem. But we entered almost immediately into fine stretches of forest, and rode under the shade of great oaks. The way, which began by the New River, soon led us over the hills to the higher levels of Watauga County. So far on our journey we had been hemmed in by low hills, and without any distant or mountain outlooks. The excessive heat seemed out of place at the elevation of over two thousand feet, on which we were traveling. Boone, the county-seat of Watauga County, was our des-

tination, and, ever since morning, the guide-boards and the trend of the roads had notified us that everything in this region tends towards Boone as a centre of interest. The simple ingenuity of some of the guide-boards impressed us. If, on coming to a fork, the traveler was to turn to the right, the sign read,

TO BOONE 10 M.

If he was to go to the left, it read,

.M 01 ƎNOOᗺ OT

A short ride of nine miles, on an ascending road, through an open, unfenced forest region, brought us long before sundown to this capital. When we had ridden into its single street, which wanders over gentle hills, and landed at the most promising of the taverns, the Friend informed his comrade that Boone was 3250 feet above Albemarle Sound, and believed by its inhabitants to be the highest village east of the Rocky Mountains. The Professor said that it might be so, but it was a God-forsaken place. Its inhabitants numbered perhaps 250, a few of them colored. It had a gaunt, shaky court-house and jail, a store or two, and two taverns. The two taverns are needed to accommodate the judges and lawyers and their clients during the session of the court. The court is the only excitement and the only amusement. It is the event from which other events date. Every-

body in the county knows exactly when court sits, and when court breaks. During the session the whole county is practically in Boone, men, women, and children. They camp there, they attend the trials, they take sides; half of them, perhaps, are witnesses, for the region is litigious, and the neighborhood quarrels are entered into with spirit. To be fond of lawsuits seems a characteristic of an isolated people in new conditions. The early settlers of New England were.

Notwithstanding the elevation of Boone, which insured a pure air, the thermometer that afternoon stood at from 85° to 89°. The flies enjoyed it. How they swarmed in this tavern! They would have carried off all the food from the dining-room table (for flies do not mind eating off oil-cloth, and are not particular how food is cooked), but for the machine with hanging flappers that swept the length of it; and they destroy all possibility of sleep except in the dark. The mountain regions of North Carolina are free from mosquitoes, but the fly has settled there, and is the universal scourge. This tavern, one end of which was a store, had a veranda in front, and a back gallery, where there were evidences of female refinement in pots of plants and flowers. The landlord himself kept tavern very much as a hostler would,

but we had to make a note in his favor that he had never heard of a milk punch. And it might as well be said here, for it will have to be insisted on later, that the traveler, who has read about the illicit stills till his imagination dwells upon the indulgence of his vitiated tastes in the mountains of North Carolina, is doomed to disappointment. If he wants to make himself an exception to the sober people whose cooking will make him long for the maddening bowl, he must bring his poison with him. We had found no bread since we left Virginia; we had seen corn-meal and water, slack-baked; we had seen potatoes fried in grease, and bacon encrusted with salt (all thirst-provokers), but nothing to drink stronger than buttermilk. And we can say that, so far as our example is concerned, we left the country as temperate as we found it. How can there be mint-juleps (to go into details) without ice? and in the summer there is probably not a pound of ice in all the State north of Buncombe County.

There is nothing special to be said about Boone. We were anxious to reach it, we were glad to leave it; we note as to all these places that our joy at departing always exceeds that on arriving, which is a merciful provision of nature for people who must keep moving. This

country is settled by genuine Americans, who have the aboriginal primitive traits of the universal Yankee nation. The front porch in the morning resembled a carpenter's shop; it was literally covered with the whittlings of the row of natives who had spent the evening there in the sedative occupation of whittling.

We took that morning a forest road to Valle Crusis, seven miles, through noble growths of oaks, chestnuts, hemlocks, rhododendrons; a charming wood road, leading to a place that, as usual, did not keep the promise of its name. Valle Crusis has a blacksmith shop and a dirty, fly-blown store. While the Professor consulted the blacksmith about a loose shoe, the Friend carried his weariness of life without provisions up to a white house on the hill, and negotiated for boiled milk. This house was occupied by flies. They must have numbered millions, settled in black swarms, covering tables, beds, walls, the veranda; the kitchen was simply a hive of them. The only book in sight, Whewell's Elements of Morality, seemed to attract flies. Query, Why should this have such a different effect from Porter's? A white house, a pleasant-looking house at a distance, amiable, kindly people in it, — why should we have arrived there on its dirty day? Alas! if we had been starving, Valle Crusis had nothing to offer us.

So we rode away, in the blazing heat, and poetry exuding from the Professor, eight miles to Banner's Elk, crossing a mountain and passing under Hanging Rock, a conspicuous feature in the landscape, and the only outcropping of rock we had seen: the face of a ledge, rounded up into the sky, with a green hood on it. From the summit we had the first extensive prospect during our journey. The road can be described as awful, — steep, stony, the horses unable to make two miles an hour on it. Now and then we encountered a rude log cabin without barns or outhouses, and a little patch of feeble corn. The women who regarded the passers from their cabin doors were frowzy and looked tired. What with the heat and the road and this discouraged appearance of humanity, we reached the residence of Dugger, at Banner's Elk, to which we had been directed, nearly exhausted. It is no use to represent this as a dash across country on impatient steeds. It was not so. The love of truth is stronger than the desire of display. And for this reason it is impossible to say that Mr. Dugger, who is an excellent man, lives in a clean and attractive house, or that he offers much that the pampered child of civilization can eat. But we shall not forget the two eggs, fresh from the hens, whose temperature must have been above the normal, nor the

spring-house in the glen, where we found a refuge from the flies and the heat. The higher we go, the hotter it is. Banner's Elk boasts an elevation of 3500 to 3700 feet.

We were not sorry, towards sunset, to descend along the Elk River towards Cranberry Forge. The Elk is a lovely stream, and, though not very clear, has a reputation for trout; but all this region was under operation of a three-years game law, to give the trout a chance to multiply, and we had no opportunity to test the value of its reputation. Yet a boy whom we encountered had a good string of quarter-pound trout, which he had taken out with a hook and a feather rudely tied on it, to resemble a fly. The road, though not to be commended, was much better than that of the morning, the forests grew charming in the cool of the evening, the whippoorwill sang, and as night fell the wanderers, in want of nearly everything that makes life desirable, stopped at the Iron Company's hotel, under the impression that it was the only comfortable hotel in North Carolina.

II.

Cranberry Forge is the first wedge of civilization fairly driven into the northwest mountains of North Carolina. A narrow-gauge railway, starting from Johnson City, follows up the narrow gorge of the Doe River, and pushes into the heart of the iron mines at Cranberry, where there is a blast furnace; and where a big company store, rows of tenement houses, heaps of slag and refuse ore, interlacing tracks, raw embankments, denuded hillsides, and a blackened landscape are the signs of a great devastating American enterprise. The Cranberry iron is in great esteem, as it has the peculiar quality of the Swedish iron. There are remains of old furnaces lower down the stream, which we passed on our way. The present "plant" is that of a Philadelphia company, whose enterprise has infused new life into all this region, made it accessible, and spoiled some pretty scenery.

When we alighted, weary, at the gate of the pretty hotel, which crowns a gentle hill and commands a pleasing, evergreen prospect

of many gentle hills, a mile or so below the works and wholly removed from all sordid associations, we were at the point of willingness that the whole country should be devastated by civilization. In the local imagination this hotel of the company is a palace of unequaled magnificence, but probably its good-taste, comfort, and quiet elegance are not appreciated after all. There is this to be said about Philadelphia — and it will go far in pleading for it in the Last Day against its monotonous rectangularity and the Babel-like ambition of its Public Building — that wherever its influence extends there will be found comfortable lodgings and the luxury of an undeniably excellent cuisine. The visible seal that Philadelphia sets on its enterprise all through the South is a good hotel.

This Cottage Beautiful has on two sides a wide veranda, set about with easy chairs; cheerful parlors and pretty chambers, finished in native woods, among which are conspicuous the satin stripes of the cucumber tree; luxurious beds, and an inviting table, ordered by a Philadelphia landlady, who knows a beefsteak from a boot-tap. Is it "low" to dwell upon these things of the senses, when one is on a tour in search of the picturesque? Let the reader ride from Abingdon through a wilder-

ness of corn-pone and rusty bacon, and then judge. There were, to be sure, novels lying about, and newspapers, and fragments of information to be picked up about a world into which the travelers seemed to emerge. They, at least, were satisfied, and went off to their rooms with the restful feeling that they had arrived somewhere, and no unquiet spirit at morn would say "to horse." To sleep, perchance to dream of Tatem and his household cemetery, and the Professor was heard muttering in his chamber,

> "Weary, with toil, I haste me to my bed,
> The dear repose for limbs with travel tired;
> But then begins a journey in my head,
> To work my mind, when body's work 's expir'd."

The morning was warm (the elevation of the hotel must be between 2500 and 3000 feet), rainy, mildly rainy; and the travelers had nothing better to do than lounge upon the veranda, read feeble ten-cent fictions, and admire the stems of the white birches, glistening in the moisture, and the rhododendron trees, twenty feet high, which were shaking off their last pink blossoms, and look down into the valley of the Doe. It is not an exciting landscape, nothing bold or specially wild in it, but restful with the monotony of some of the wooded Pennsylvania hills.

Sunday came up smiling, a lovely day, but offering no church privileges, for the ordinance of preaching is only occasional in this region. The ladies of the hotel have, however, gathered in the valley a Sunday-school of fifty children from the mountain cabins. A couple of rainy days, with the thermometer rising to 80°, combined with natural laziness to detain the travelers in this cottage of ease. They enjoyed this the more because it was on their consciences that they should visit Linville Falls, some twenty-five miles eastward, long held up before them as the most magnificent feature of this region, and on no account to be omitted. Hence naturally a strong desire to omit it. The Professor takes bold ground against these abnormal freaks of nature, and it was nothing to him that the public would demand that we should see Linville Falls. In the first place we could find no one who had ever seen them, and we spent two days in catechizing natives and strangers. The nearest we came to information was from a workman at the furnace, who was born and raised within three miles of the Falls. He had heard of people going there. He had never seen them himself. It was a good twenty-five miles there, over the worst road in the State — we 'd think it thirty before we got there. Fifty miles of such travel to

see a little water run down hill! The travelers reflected. Every country has a local waterfall of which it boasts; they had seen a great many. One more would add little to the experience of life. The vagueness of information, to be sure, lured the travelers to undertake the journey; but the temptation was resisted — something ought to be left for the next explorer — and so Linville remains a thing of the imagination.

Towards evening, July 29th, between showers, the Professor and the Friend rode along the narrow-gauge road, down Johnson's Creek, to Roan Station, the point of departure for ascending Roan Mountain. It was a ride of an hour and a half over a fair road, fringed with rhododendrons, nearly blossomless; but at a point on the stream this sturdy shrub had formed a long bower where-under a table might have been set for a temperance picnic, completely overgrown with wild grape, and still gay with bloom. The habitations on the way are mostly board shanties and mean frame cabins, but the railway is introducing ambitious architecture here and there in the form of ornamental filigree work on flimsy houses; ornamentation is apt to precede comfort in our civilization.

Roan Station is on the Doe River (which

flows down from Roan Mountain), and is marked at 2650 feet above the sea. The visitor will find here a good hotel, with open wood fires (not ungrateful in a July evening), and obliging people. This railway from Johnson City, hanging on the edge of the precipices that wall the gorge of the Doe, is counted in this region by the inhabitants one of the engineering wonders of the world. The tourist is urged by all means to see both it and Linville Falls.

The tourist on horseback, in search of exercise and recreation, is not probably expected to take stock of moral conditions. But this Mitchell County, although it was a Union county during the war and is Republican in politics (the Southern reader will perhaps prefer another adverb to "although"), has had the worst possible reputation. The mountains were hiding-places of illicit distilleries; the woods were full of grog-shanties, where the inflaming fluid was sold as "native brandy," quarrels and neighborhood difficulties were frequent, and the knife and pistol were used on the slightest provocation. Fights arose about boundaries and the title to mica mines, and with the revenue officers; and force was the arbiter of all disputes. Within the year four murders were committed in the sparsely set-

tled county. Travel on any of the roads was unsafe. The tone of morals was what might be expected with such lawlessness. A lady who came up on the road on the 4th of July, when an excursion party of country people took possession of the cars, witnessed a scene and heard language past belief. Men, women, and children drank from whiskey bottles that continually circulated, and a wild orgy resulted. Profanity, indecent talk on topics that even the license of the sixteenth century would not have tolerated, and freedom of manners that even Teniers would have shrunk from putting on canvas made the journey horrible.

The unrestrained license of whiskey and assault and murder had produced a reaction a few months previous to our visit. The people had risen up in their indignation and broken up the groggeries. So far as we observed temperance prevailed, backed by public opinion. In our whole ride through the mountain region we saw only one or two places where liquor was sold.

It is called twelve miles from Roan Station to Roan Summit. The distance is probably nearer fourteen, and our horses were five hours in walking it. For six miles the road runs by Doe River, here a pretty brook shaded with laurel and rhododendron, and a few cultivated

patches of ground and infrequent houses. It was a blithe morning, and the horsemen would have given full indulgence to the spirit of adventure but for the attitude of the Professor towards mountains. It was not with him a matter of feeling, but of principle, not to ascend them. But here lay Roan, a long, sprawling ridge, lifting itself 6250 feet up into the sky. Impossible to go around it, and the other side must be reached. The Professor was obliged to surrender, and surmount a difficulty which he could not philosophize out of his mind.

From the base of the mountain a road is very well engineered, in easy grades for carriages, to the top; but it was in poor repair and stony. We mounted slowly through splendid forests, specially of fine chestnuts and hemlocks. This big timber continues till within a mile and a half of the summit by the winding road, really within a short distance of the top. Then there is a narrow belt of scrubby hardwood, moss-grown, and then large balsams, which crown the mountain. As soon as we came out upon the southern slope we found great open spaces, covered with succulent grass, and giving excellent pasturage to cattle. These rich mountain meadows are found on all the heights of this region. The surface of

Roan is uneven, and has no one culminating peak that commands the country, like the peak of Mount Washington, but several eminences within its range of probably a mile and a half, where various views can be had. Near the highest point, sheltered from the north by balsams, stands a house of entertainment, with a detached cottage, looking across the great valley to the Black Mountain range. The surface of the mountain is pebbly, but few rocks crop out; no ledges of any size are seen except at a distance from the hotel, on the north side, and the mountain consequently lacks that savage, unsubduable aspect which the White Hills of New Hampshire have. It would, in fact, have been difficult to realize that we were over 6000 feet above the sea, except for that pallor in the sunlight, that atmospheric thinness and want of color which is an unpleasant characteristic of high altitudes. To be sure, there is a certain brilliancy in the high air — it is apt to be foggy on Roan — and objects appear in sharp outline, but I have often experienced on such places that feeling of melancholy, which would, of course, deepen upon us all if we were sensible that the sun was gradually withdrawing its power of warmth and light. The black balsam is neither a cheerful nor a picturesque tree; the frequent rains and

mists on Roan keep the grass and mosses green, but the ground damp. Doubtless a high mountain covered with vegetation has its compensation, but for me the naked granite rocks in sun and shower are more cheerful.

The advantage of Roan is that one can live there and be occupied for a long time in mineral and botanical study. Its mild climate, moisture, and great elevation make it unique in this country for the botanist. The variety of plants assembled there is very large, and there are many, we were told, never or rarely found elsewhere in the United States. At any rate the botanists rave about Roan Mountain and spend weeks on it at a time. We found there ladies who could draw for us Grey's lily (then passed), and had kept specimens of the rhododendron (not growing elsewhere in this region), which has a deep red, almost purple color.

The hotel (since replaced by a good house) was a rude mountain structure, with a couple of comfortable rooms for office and sitting-room, in which big wood fires were blazing; for though the thermometer might record 60°, as it did when we arrived, fire was welcome. Sleeping places partitioned off in the loft above gave the occupants a feeling of camping out, all the conveniences being primitive; and when the wind

rose in the night and darkness, and the loose boards rattled and the timbers creaked, the sensation was not unlike that of being at sea. The hotel was satisfactorily kept, and Southern guests, from as far south as New Orleans, were spending the season there, and not finding time hang heavy on their hands. This statement is perhaps worth more than pages of description as to the character of Roan, and its contrast to Mount Washington.

The summer weather is exceedingly uncertain on all these North Carolina mountains; they are apt at any moment to be enveloped in mist; and it would rather rain on them than not. On the afternoon of our arrival there was fine air and fair weather, but not a clear sky. The distance was hazy, but the outlines were preserved. We could see White Top, in Virginia; Grandfather Mountain, a long serrated range; the twin towers of Linville; and the entire range of the Black Mountains, rising from the valley, and apparently lower than we were. They get the name of Black from the balsams which cover the summits.

The rain on Roan was of less annoyance by reason of the delightful company assembled at the hotel, which was in a manner at home there, and, thrown upon its own resources, came out uncommonly strong in agreeableness.

There was a fiddle in the house, which had some of the virtues of that celebrated in the history of old Mark Langston; the Professor was enabled to produce anything desired out of the literature of the eighteenth century; and what with the repartee of bright women, big wood fires, reading, and chat, there was no dull day or evening on Roan. I can fancy, however, that it might tire in time, if one were not a botanist, without the resource of women's society. The ladies staying here were probably all accomplished botanists, and the writer is indebted to one of them for a list of plants found on Roan, among which is an interesting weed, catalogued as *Humana, perplexia negligens.* The species is, however, common elsewhere.

The second morning opened, after a night of high wind, with a thunder shower. After it passed, the visitors tried to reach Eagle Cliff, two miles off, whence an extensive western prospect is had, but were driven back by a tempest, and rain practically occupied the day. Now and then through the parted clouds we got a glimpse of a mountain-side, or the gleam of a valley. On the lower mountains, at wide intervals apart, were isolated settlements, commonly a wretched cabin and a spot of girdled trees. A clergyman here, not long ago, under-

took to visit some of these cabins and carry his message to them. In one wretched hut of logs he found a poor woman, with whom, after conversation on serious subjects, he desired to pray. She offered no objection, and he kneeled down and prayed. The woman heard him, and watched him for some moments with curiosity, in an effort to ascertain what he was doing, and then said: —

"Why, a man did that when he put my girl in a hole."

Towards night the wind hauled round from the south to the northwest, and we went to High Bluff, a point on the north edge, where some rocks are piled up above the evergreens, to get a view of the sunset. In every direction the mountains were clear, and a view was obtained of the vast horizon and the hills and lowlands of several States — a continental prospect, scarcely anywhere else equaled for variety or distance. The grandeur of mountains depends mostly on the state of the atmosphere. Grandfather loomed up much more loftily than the day before, the giant range of the Blacks asserted itself in grim inaccessibility, and we could see, a small pyramid on the southwest horizon, King's Mountain in South Carolina, estimated to be distant one hundred and fifty miles. To the north Roan falls from this

point abruptly, and we had, like a map below us, the low country all the way into Virginia. The clouds lay like lakes in the valleys of the lower hills, and in every direction were ranges of mountains wooded to the summits. Off to the west by south lay the Great Smoky Mountains, disputing eminence with the Blacks.

Magnificent and impressive as the spectacle was, we were obliged to contrast it unfavorably with that of the White Hills. The rock here is a sort of sand or pudding stone; there is no limestone or granite. And all the hills are tree-covered. To many this clothing of verdure is most restful and pleasing. I missed the sharp outlines, the delicate artistic sky lines, sharply defined in uplifted bare granite peaks and ridges, with the purple and violet color of the northern mountains, and which it seems to me that limestone and granite formations give. There are none of the great gorges and awful abysses of the White Mountains, both valleys and mountains here being more uniform in outline. There are few precipices and jutting crags, and less is visible of the giant ribs and bones of the planet.

Yet Roan is a noble mountain. A lady from Tennessee asked me if I had ever seen anything to compare with it — she thought there could be nothing in the world. One has to

dodge this sort of question in the South occasionally, not to offend a just local pride. It is certainly one of the most habitable of big mountains. It is roomy on top, there is space to move about without too great fatigue, and one might pleasantly spend a season there, if he had agreeable company and natural tastes.

Getting down from Roan on the south side is not as easy as ascending on the north; the road for five miles to the foot of the mountain is merely a river of pebbles, gullied by the heavy rains, down which the horses picked their way painfully. The travelers endeavored to present a dashing and cavalier appearance to the group of ladies who waved good-by from the hotel, as they took their way over the waste and wind-blown declivities, but it was only a show, for the horses would neither caracole nor champ the bit (at a dollar a day) down hill over the slippery stones, and, truth to tell, the wanderers turned with regret from the society of leisure and persiflage to face the wilderness of Mitchell County. "How heavy," exclaimed the Professor, pricking Laura Matilda to call her attention sharply to her footing: —

> "How heavy do I journey on the way,
> When what I seek — my weary travel's end —
> Doth teach that ease and that repose to say,

'Thus far the miles are measur'd from thy friend!'
The beast that bears me, tired with my woe,
Plods dully on, to bear that weight in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider loved not speed, being made from thee:
The bloody spur cannot provoke him on
That sometimes anger thrusts into his hide,
Which heavily he answers with a groan,
More sharp to me than spurring to his side;
For that same groan doth put this in my mind;
My grief lies onward and my joy behind."

This was not spoken to the group who fluttered their farewells, but poured out to the uncomplaining forest, which rose up in ever statelier and grander ranks to greet the travelers as they descended — the silent vast forest, without note of bird or chip of squirrel, only the wind tossing the great branches high overhead in response to the sonnet. Is there any region or circumstance of life that the poet did not forecast and provide for? But what would have been his feelings if he could have known that almost three centuries after these lines were penned, they would be used to express the emotion of an unsentimental traveler in the primeval forests of the New World? At any rate he peopled the New World with the children of his imagination. And, thought the Friend, whose attention to his horse did not permit him to drop into poetry, Shakespeare might have had a vision of this vast continent,

though he did not refer to it, when he exclaimed: —

> "What is your substance, whereof are you made,
> That millions of strange shadows on you tend?"

Bakersville, the capital of Mitchell County, is eight miles from the top of Roan, and the last three miles of the way the horsemen found tolerable going, over which the horses could show their paces. The valley looked fairly thrifty and bright, and was a pleasing introduction to Bakersville, a pretty place in the hills, of some six hundred inhabitants, with two churches, three indifferent hotels, and a court-house. This mountain town, 2550 feet above the sea, is said to have a decent winter climate, with little snow, favorable to fruit-growing, and, by contrast with New England, encouraging to people with weak lungs.

This is the centre of the mica mining, and of considerable excitement about minerals. All around, the hills are spotted with "diggings." Most of the mines which yield well show signs of having been worked before, a very long time ago, no doubt by the occupants before the Indians. The mica is of excellent quality and easily mined. It is got out in large irregular-shaped blocks and transported to the factories, where it is carefully split by hand, and the laminæ, of as large size as can be obtained, are

trimmed with shears and tied up in packages for market. The quantity of refuse, broken, and rotten mica piled up about the factories is immense, and all the roads round about glisten with its scales. Garnets are often found imbedded in the laminæ, flattened by the extreme pressure to which the mass was subjected. It is fascinating material, this mica, to handle, and we amused ourselves by experimenting on the thinness to which its scales could be reduced by splitting. It was at Bakersville that we saw specimens of mica that resembled the delicate tracery in the moss-agate, and had the iridescent sheen of the rainbow colors — the most delicate greens, reds, blues, purples, and gold, changing from one to the other in the reflected light. In the texture were the tracings of fossil forms of ferns and the most exquisite and delicate vegetable beauty of the coal age. But the magnet shows this tracery to be iron. We were shown also emeralds and "diamonds," picked up in this region, and there is a mild expectation in all the inhabitants of great mineral treasure. A singular product of the region is the flexible sandstone. It is a most uncanny stone. A slip of it a couple of feet long and an inch in diameter each way bends in the hand like a half frozen snake. This conduct of a substance that we have been

taught to regard as inflexible impairs one's confidence in the stability of nature and affects him as an earthquake does.

This excitement over mica and other minerals has the usual effect of starting up business and creating bad blood. Fortunes have been made, and lost in riotous living; scores of visionary men have been disappointed; lawsuits about titles and claims have multiplied, and quarrels ending in murder have been frequent in the past few years. The mica and the illicit whiskey have worked together to make this region one of lawlessness and violence. The travelers were told stories of the lack of common morality and decency in the region, but they made no note of them. And, perhaps fortunately, they were not there during court week to witness the scenes of license that were described. This court week, which draws hither the whole population, is a sort of Saturnalia. Perhaps the worst of this is already a thing of the past; for the outrages a year before had reached such a pass that by a common movement the sale of whiskey was stopped (not interdicted, but stopped), and not a drop of liquor could be bought in Bakersville nor within three miles of it.

The jail at Bakersville is a very simple residence. The main building is brick, two stories

high and about twelve feet square. The walls are so loosely laid up that it seems as if a colored prisoner might butt his head through. Attached to this is a room for the jailer. In the lower room is a wooden cage, made of logs bolted together and filled with spikes, nine feet by ten feet square and perhaps seven or eight feet high. Between this cage and the wall is a space of eighteen inches in width. It has a narrow door, and an opening through which the food is passed to the prisoners, and a conduit leading out of it. Of course it soon becomes foul, and in warm weather somewhat warm. A recent prisoner, who wanted more ventilation than the State allowed him, found some means, by a loose plank, I think, to batter a hole in the outer wall opposite the window in the cage, and this ragged opening, seeming to the jailer a good sanitary arrangement, remains. Two murderers occupied this apartment at the time of our visit. During the recent session of court, ten men had been confined in this narrow space, without room enough for them to lie down together. The cage in the room above, a little larger, had for tenant a person who was jailed for some misunderstanding about an account, and who was probably innocent — from the jailer's statement. This box is a wretched residence, month after month, while awaiting trial.

We learned on inquiry that it is practically impossible to get a jury to convict of murder in this region, and that these admitted felons would undoubtedly escape. We even heard that juries were purchasable here, and that a man's success in court depended upon the length of his purse. This is such an unheard-of thing that we refused to credit it. When the Friend attempted to arouse the indignation of the Professor about the barbarity of this jail, the latter defended it on the ground that as confinement was the only punishment that murderers were likely to receive in this region, it was well to make their detention disagreeable to them. But the Friend did not like this wild-beast cage for men, and could only exclaim, "Oh, murder! what crimes are done in thy name."

If the comrades wished an adventure, they had a small one, more interesting to them than to the public, the morning they left Bakersville to ride to Burnsville, which sets itself up as the capital of Yancey. The way for the first three miles lay down a small creek and in a valley fairly settled, the houses, a store, and a grist-mill giving evidence of the new enterprise of the region. When Toe River was reached there was a choice of routes. We might ford the Toe at that point, where the

river was wide, but shallow, and the crossing safe, and climb over the mountain by a rough but sightly road, or descend the stream by a better road and ford the river at a place rather dangerous to those unfamiliar with it. The danger attracted us, but we promptly chose the hill road on account of the views, for we were weary of the limited valley prospects.

The Toe River, even here, where it bears westward, is a very respectable stream in size, and not to be trifled with after a shower. It gradually turns northward, and joining the Nollechucky becomes part of the Tennessee system. We crossed it by a long, diagonal ford, slipping and sliding about on the round stones, and began the ascent of a steep hill. The sun beat down unmercifully, the way was stony, and the horses did not relish the weary climbing. The Professor, who led the way, not for the sake of leadership but to be the discoverer of laden blackberry bushes, which began to offer occasional refreshment, discouraged by the inhospitable road and perhaps oppressed by the moral backwardness of things in general, cried out: —

> "Tired with all these, for restful death I cry, —
> As, to behold desert a beggar born,
> And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
> And purest faith unhappily forsworn,

> And gilded honor shamefully misplaced,
> And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
> And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
> And strength by limping sway disabled,
> And art made tongue-tied by authority,
> And folly (doctor-like) controlling skill,
> And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
> And captive good attending captain ill:
> Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
> Save that, to die, I leave my love alone."

In the midst of a lively discussion of this pessimistic view of the inequalities of life, in which desert and capacity are so often put at disadvantage by birth in beggarly conditions, and brazen assumption raises the dust from its chariot wheels for modest merit to plod along in, the Professor swung himself off his horse to attack a blackberry bush, and the Friend, representing simple truth, and desirous of getting a wider prospect, urged his horse up the hill. At the top he encountered a stranger, on a sorrel horse, with whom he entered into conversation and extracted all the discouragement the man had as to the road to Burnsville.

Nevertheless, the view opened finely and extensively. There are few exhilarations comparable to that of riding or walking along a high ridge, and the spirits of the traveler rose many degrees above the point of restful death, for which the Professor was crying when he

encountered the blackberry bushes. Luckily the Friend soon fell in with a like temptation, and dismounted. He discovered something that spoiled his appetite for berries. His coat, strapped on behind the saddle, had worked loose, the pocket was open, and the pocket-book was gone. This was serious business. For while the Professor was the cashier, and traveled like a Rothschild, with large drafts, the Friend represented the sub-treasury. That very morning, in response to inquiry as to the sinews of travel, the Friend had displayed, without counting, a roll of bills. These bills had now disappeared, and when the Friend turned back to communicate his loss, in the character of needy nothing not trimm'd in jollity, he had a sympathetic listener to the tale of woe.

Going back on such a journey is the woefulest experience, but retrace our steps we must. Perhaps the pocket-book lay in the road not half a mile back. But not in a half a mile, or a mile, was it found. Probably, then, the man on the sorrel horse had picked it up. But who was the man on the sorrel horse, and where had he gone? Probably the coat worked loose in crossing Toe River and the pocket-book had gone down stream. The number of probabilities was infinite, and each more plausible than

the others as it occurred to us. We inquired at every house we had passed on the way, we questioned every one we met. At length it began to seem improbable that any one would remember if he had picked up a pocket-book that morning. This is just the sort of thing that slips an untrained memory.

At a post-office or doctor's shop, or inn for drovers, it might be either or neither, where several horses were tied to the fence, and a group of men were tilted back in cane chairs on the veranda, we unfolded our misfortune and made particular inquiries for a man on a sorrel horse. Yes, such a man, David Thomas by name, had just ridden towards Bakersville. If he had found the pocket-book, we would recover it. He was an honest man. It might, however, fall into hands that would freeze to it. Upon consultation, it was the general verdict that there were men in the county who would keep it if they had picked it up. But the assembly manifested the liveliest interest in the incident. One suggested Toe River. Another thought it risky to drop a purse on any road. But there was a chorus of desire expressed that we should find it, and in this anxiety was exhibited a decided sensitiveness about the honor of Mitchell County. It seemed too bad that a stranger should go away with

the impression that it was not safe to leave money anywhere in it. We felt very much obliged for this genuine sympathy, and we told them that if a pocket-book were lost in this way on a Connecticut road, there would be felt no neighborhood responsibility for it, and that nobody would take any interest in the incident except the man who lost, and the man who found.

By the time the travelers pulled up at a store in Bakersville they had lost all expectation of recovering the missing article, and were discussing the investment of more money in an advertisement in the weekly newspaper of the capital. The Professor, whose reform sentiments agreed with those of the newspaper, advised it. There was a group of idlers, mica acquaintances of the morning, and philosophers in front of the store, and the Friend opened the colloquy by asking if a man named David Thomas had been seen in town. He was in town, had ridden in within an hour, and his brother, who was in the group, would go in search of him. The information was then given of the loss, and that the rider had met David Thomas just before it was discovered, on the mountain beyond the Toe. The news made a sensation, and by the time David Thomas appeared a crowd of a hundred had

drawn around the horsemen eager for further developments. Mr. Thomas was the least excited of the group as he took his position on the sidewalk, conscious of the dignity of the occasion and that he was about to begin a duel in which both reputation and profit were concerned. He recollected meeting the travelers in the morning.

The Friend said, "I discovered that I had lost my purse just after meeting you; it may have been dropped in Toe River, but I was told back here that if David Thomas had picked it up it was as safe as if it were in the bank."

"What sort of a pocket-book was it?" asked Mr. Thomas.

"It was of crocodile skin, or what is sold for that, very likely it is an imitation, and about so large" — indicating the size.

"What had it in it?"

"Various things. Some specimens of mica; some bank checks, some money."

"Anything else?"

"Yes, a photograph. And, oh, something that I presume is not in another pocket-book in North Carolina, — in an envelope, a lock of the hair of George Washington, the Father of his Country." Sensation, mixed with incredulity. Washington's hair did seem such an odd part of an outfit for a journey of this kind.

"How much money was in it?"

"That I cannot say, exactly. I happen to remember four twenty dollar United States notes, and a roll of small bills, perhaps something over a hundred dollars."

"Is that the pocket-book?" asked David Thomas, slowly pulling the loved and lost out of his trousers pocket.

"It is."

"You 'd be willing to take your oath on it?"

"I should be delighted to."

"Well, I guess there ain't so much money in it. You can count it (handing it over); there hain't been nothing taken out. I can't read, but my friend here counted it over, and he says there ain't as much as that."

Intense interest in the result of the counting. One hundred and ten dollars! The Friend selected one of the best engraved of the notes, and appealed to the crowd if they thought that was the square thing to do. They did so think, and David Thomas said it was abundant. And then said the Friend: —

"I 'm exceedingly grateful to you besides. Washington's hair is getting scarce, and I did not want to lose these few hairs, gray as they are. You 've done the honest thing, Mr. Thomas, as was expected of you. You might

have kept the whole. But I reckon if there had been five hundred dollars in the book and you had kept it, it would n't have done you half as much good as giving it up has done; and your reputation as an honest man is worth a good deal more than this pocket-book. [The Professor was delighted with this sentiment, because it reminded him of a Sunday-school.] I shall go away with a high opinion of the honesty of Mitchell County."

"Oh, he lives in Yancey," cried two or three voices. At which there was a great laugh.

"Well, I wondered where he came from." And the Mitchell County people laughed again at their own expense, and the levee broke up. It was exceedingly gratifying, as we spread the news of the recovered property that afternoon at every house on our way to the Toe, to see what pleasure it gave. Every man appeared to feel that the honor of the region had been on trial and had stood the test.

The eighteen miles to Burnsville had now to be added to the morning excursion, but the travelers were in high spirits, feeling the truth of the adage that it is better to have loved and lost, than never to have lost at all. They decided, on reflection, to join company with the mail-rider, who was going to Burnsville by the shorter route, and could pilot them over the dangerous ford of the Toe.

The mail-rider was a lean, sallow, sinewy man, mounted on a sorry sorrel nag, who proved, however, to have blood in her, and to be a fast walker and full of endurance. The mail-rider was taciturn, a natural habit for a man who rides alone the year round, over a lonely road, and has nothing whatever to think of. He had been in the war sixteen months, in Hugh White's regiment, — reckon you 've heerd of him?

"Confederate?"

"Which?"

"Was he on the Union or Confederate side?"

"Oh, Union."

"Were you in any engagements?"

"Which?"

"Did you have any fighting?"

"Not reg'lar."

"What did you do?"

"Which?"

"What did you do in Hugh White's regiment?"

"Oh, just cavorted round the mountains."

"You lived on the country?"

"Which?"

"Picked up what you could find, corn, bacon, horses?"

"That 's about so. Did n't make much dif-

ference which side was round, the country got cleaned out."

"Plunder seems to have been the object?"

"Which?"

"You got a living out of the farmers?"

"You bet."

Our friend and guide seemed to have been a jayhawker and mountain marauder — on the right side. His attachment to the word "which" prevented any lively flow of conversation, and there seemed to be only two trains of ideas running in his mind: one was the subject of horses and saddles, and the other was the danger of the ford we were coming to, and he exhibited a good deal of ingenuity in endeavoring to excite our alarm. He returned to the ford from every other conversational excursion, and after every silence. "I do' know 's there 's any great danger; not if you know the ford. Folks is carried away there. The Toe gits up sudden. There 's been right smart rain lately. If you 're afraid, you can git set over in a dugout, and I 'll take your horses across. Mebbe you 're used to fording? It 's a pretty bad ford for them as don't know it. But you 'll get along, if you mind your eye. There 's some rocks you 'll have to look out for. But you 'll be all right, if you follow me."

Not being very successful in raising an interest in the dangers of his ford, although he could not forego indulging a malicious pleasure in trying to make the strangers uncomfortable, he finally turned his attention to a trade. "This hoss of mine," he said, "is just the kind of brute-beast you want for this country. Your hosses is too heavy. How 'll you swap for that one o' yourn?" The reiterated assertion that the horses were not ours, that they were hired, made little impression on him. All the way to Burnsville he kept referring to the subject of a trade. The instinct of "swap" was strong in him. When we met a yoke of steers, he turned round and bantered the owner for a trade. Our saddles took his fancy. They were of the army pattern, and he allowed that one of them would just suit him. He rode a small flat English pad, across which was flung the United States mail pouch, apparently empty. He dwelt upon the fact that his saddle was new and ours were old, and the advantages that would accrue to us from the exchange. He did n't care if they had been through the war, as they had, for he fancied an army saddle. The Friend answered for himself that the saddle he rode belonged to a distinguished Union general, and had a bullet in it that was put there by a careless Confederate in the first battle of

Bull Run, and the owner would not part with it for money. But the mail-rider said he did n't mind that. He would n't mind swapping his new saddle for my old one and the rubber coat and leggins. Long before we reached the ford we thought we would like to swap the guide, even at the risk of drowning. The ford was passed, in due time, with no inconvenience save that of wet feet, for the stream was breast high to the horses; but being broad and swift and full of sunken rocks and slippery stones and the crossing tortuous, it is not a ford to be commended. There is a curious delusion that a rider has in crossing a swift broad stream. It is that he is rapidly drifting up stream, while in fact the tendency of the horse is to go with the current.

The road in the afternoon was not unpicturesque, owing to the streams and the ever noble forests, but the prospect was always very limited. Agriculturally, the country was mostly undeveloped. The travelers endeavored to get from the rider an estimate of the price of land. Not much sold, he said. "There was one sale of a big piece last year; the owner enthorited Big Tom Wilson to sell it, but I d' know what he got for it."

All the way along the habitations were small log cabins, with one room, chinked with mud,

and these were far between ; and only occasionally thereby a similar log structure, unchinked, laid up like a cob house, that served for a stable. Not much cultivation, except now and then a little patch of poor corn on a steep hillside, occasionally a few apple-trees, and a peach-tree without fruit. Here and there was a house that had been half finished and then abandoned, or a shanty in which a couple of young married people were just beginning life. Generally the cabins (confirming the accuracy of the census of 1880) swarmed with children, and nearly all the women were thin and sickly.

In the day's ride we did not see a wheeled vehicle, and only now and then a horse. We met on the road small sleds, drawn by a steer, sometimes by a cow, on which a bag of grist was being hauled to the mill, and boys mounted on steers gave us good evening with as much pride as if they were bestriding fiery horses.

In a house of the better class, which was a post-house, and where the rider and the woman of the house had a long consultation over a letter to be registered, we found the rooms decorated with patent-medicine pictures, which were often framed in strips of mica, an evidence of culture that was worth noting. Mica was the rage. Every one with whom we talked, except the rider, had more or less the mineral

fever. The impression was general that the mountain region of North Carolina was entering upon a career of wonderful mineral development, and the most extravagant expectations were entertained. Mica was the shining object of most "prospecting," but gold was also on the cards.

The country about Burnsville is not only mildly picturesque, but very pleasing. Burnsville, the county-seat of Yancey, at an elevation of 2840 feet, is more like a New England village than any hitherto seen. Most of the houses stand about a square, which contains the shabby court-house; around it are two small churches, a jail, an inviting tavern, with a long veranda, and a couple of stores. On an overlooking hill is the seminary. Mica mining is the exciting industry, but it is agriculturally a good country. The tavern had recently been enlarged to meet the new demands for entertainment, and is a roomy structure, fresh with paint and only partially organized. The travelers were much impressed with the brilliant chambers, the floors of which were painted in alternate stripes of vivid green and red. The proprietor, a very intelligent and enterprising man, who had traveled often in the North, was full of projects for the development of his region and foremost in its enterprises, and had

formed a considerable collection of minerals. Besides, more than any one else we met, he appreciated the beauty of his country, and took us to a neighboring hill, where we had a view of Table Mountain to the east and the nearer giant Blacks. The elevation of Burnsville gives it a delightful summer climate, the gentle undulations of the country are agreeable, the views noble, the air is good, and it is altogether a "livable" and attractive place. With facilities of communication, it would be a favorite summer resort. Its nearness to the great mountains (the whole Black range is in Yancey County), its fine pure air, its opportunity for fishing and hunting, commend it to those in search of an interesting and restful retreat in summer.

But it should be said that before the country can attract and retain travelers, its inhabitants must learn something about the preparation of food. If, for instance, the landlord's wife at Burnsville had traveled with her husband, her table would probably have been more on a level with his knowledge of the world, and it would have contained something that the wayfaring man, though a Northerner, could eat. We have been on the point several times in this journey of making the observation, but have been restrained by a reluctance to touch upon politics, that it was no wonder that a people with such

a cuisine should have rebelled. The travelers were in a rebellious mood most of the time.

The evidences of enterprise in this region were pleasant to see, but the observers could not but regret, after all, the intrusion of the money-making spirit, which is certain to destroy much of the present simplicity. It is as yet, to a degree, tempered by a philosophic spirit. The other guest of the house was a sedate, long-bearded traveler for some Philadelphia house, and in the evening he and the landlord fell into a conversation upon what Socrates calls the disadvantage of the pursuit of wealth to the exclusion of all noble objects, and they let their fancy play about Vanderbilt, who was agreed to be the richest man in the world, or that ever lived.

"All I want," said the long-bearded man, "is enough to be comfortable. I would n't have Vanderbilt's wealth if he 'd give it to me."

"Nor I," said the landlord. "Give me just enough to be comfortable. [The tourist could n't but note that his ideas of enough to be comfortable had changed a good deal since he had left his little farm and gone into the mica business, and visited New York, and enlarged and painted his tavern.] I should like to know what more Vanderbilt gets out of his money than I get out of mine. I heard tell of a young

man who went to Vanderbilt to get employment. Vanderbilt finally offered to give the young man, if he would work for him, just what he got himself. The young man jumped at that — he 'd be perfectly satisfied with that pay. And Vanderbilt said that all he got was what he could eat and wear, and offered to give the young man his board and clothes."

"I declare," said the long-bearded man. "That 's just it. Did you ever see Vanderbilt's house? Neither did I, but I heard he had a vault built in it five feet thick, solid. He put in it two hundred millions of dollars, in gold. After a year, he opened it and put in twelve millions more, and called that a poor year. They say his house has gold shutters to the windows, so I 've heard."

"I should n't wonder," said the landlord. "I heard he had one door in his house cost forty thousand dollars. I don't know what it is made of, unless it 's made of gold."

Sunday was a hot and quiet day. The stores were closed and the two churches also, this not being the Sunday for the itinerant preacher. The jail also showed no sign of life, and when we asked about it, we learned that it was empty, and had been for some time. No liquor is sold in the place, nor within at least three miles of it. It is not much use to try to run a jail without liquor.

In the course of the morning a couple of stout fellows arrived, leading between them a young man whom they had arrested, — it did n't appear on any warrant, but they wanted to get him committed and locked up. The offense charged was carrying a pistol; the boy had not used it against anybody, but he had flourished it about and threatened, and the neighbors would n't stand that; they were bound to enforce the law against carrying concealed weapons.

The captors were perfectly good-natured and on friendly enough terms with the young man, who offered no resistance, and seemed not unwilling to go to jail. But a practical difficulty arose. The jail was locked up, the sheriff had gone away into the country with the key, and no one could get in. It did not appear that there was any provision for boarding the man in jail; no one in fact kept it. The sheriff was sent for, but was not to be found, and the prisoner and his captors loafed about the square all day, sitting on the fence, rolling on the grass, all of them sustained by a simple trust that the jail would be open some time.

Late in the afternoon we left them there, trying to get into the jail. But we took a personal leaf out of this experience. Our Virginia friends, solicitous for our safety in this wild

country, had urged us not to venture into it without arms — take at least, they insisted, a revolver each. And now we had to congratulate ourselves that we had not done so. If we had, we should doubtless on that Sunday have been waiting, with the other law-breaker, for admission into the Yancey County jail.

III.

From Burnsville the next point in our route was Asheville, the most considerable city in western North Carolina, a resort of fashion, and the capital of Buncombe County. It is distant some forty to forty-five miles, too long a journey for one day over such roads. The easier and common route is by the Ford of Big Ivy, eighteen miles, — the first stopping place ; and that was a long ride for the late afternoon when we were in condition to move.

The landlord suggested that we take another route, stay that night on Caney River with Big Tom Wilson, only eight miles from Burnsville, cross Mt. Mitchell, and go down the valley of the Swannanoa to Asheville. He represented this route as shorter and infinitely more picturesque. There was nothing worth seeing on the Big Ivy way. With scarcely a moment's reflection, and while the horses were saddling, we decided to ride to Big Tom Wilson's. I could not at the time understand, and I cannot now, why the Professor consented. I should hardly dare yet confess to my fixed purpose to ascend

Mt. Mitchell. It was equally fixed in the Professor's mind not to do it. We had not discussed it much. But it is safe to say that if he had one well defined purpose on this trip, it was not to climb Mitchell. "Not," as he put it, —

> "Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
> Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,"

had suggested the possibility that he could do it.

But at the moment the easiest thing to do seemed to be to ride down to Wilson's. When there we could turn across country to the Big Ivy, although, said the landlord, you can ride over Mitchell just as easy as anywhere — a lady rode plump over the peak of it last week, and never got off her horse. You are not obliged to go; at Big Tom's, you can go any way you please.

Besides, Big Tom himself weighed in the scale more than Mt. Mitchell, and not to see him was to miss one of the most characteristic productions of the country, the typical backwoodsman, hunter, guide. So we rode down Bolling Creek, through a pretty, broken country, crossed the Caney River, and followed it up a few miles to Wilson's plantation. There are little intervales along the river, where hay is cut and corn grown, but the region is not

much cleared, and the stock browse about in the forest. Wilson is the agent of the New York owner of a tract of some thirteen thousand acres of forest, including the greater portion of Mt. Mitchell, a wilderness well stocked with bears and deer, and full of streams abounding in trout. It is also the playground of the rattlesnake. With all these attractions Big Tom's life is made lively in watching game poachers, and endeavoring to keep out the foraging cattle of the few neighbors. It is not that the cattle do much injury in the forest, but the looking after them is made a pretense for roaming around, and the roamers are liable to have to defend themselves against the deer, or their curiosity is excited about the bears, and lately they have taken to exploding powder in the streams to kill the fish.

Big Tom's plantation has an open-work stable, an ill-put-together frame house, with two rooms and a kitchen, and a veranda in front, a loft, and a spring-house in the rear. Chickens and other animals have free run of the premises. Some fish-rods hung in the porch, and hunter's gear depended on hooks in the passage-way to the kitchen. In one room were three beds, in the other two, only one in the kitchen. On the porch was a loom, with a piece of cloth in process. The establishment

had the air of taking care of itself. Neither Big Tom nor his wife were at home. Sunday seemed to be a visiting day, and the travelers had met many parties on horseback. Mrs. Wilson was away for a visit of a day or two. One of the sons, who was lounging on the veranda, was at last induced to put up the horses; a very old woman, who mumbled and glared at the visitors, was found in the kitchen, but no intelligible response could be got out of her. Presently a bright little girl, the housekeeper in charge, appeared. She said that her Paw had gone up to her brother's (her brother was just married and lived up the river in the house where Mr. Murchison stayed when he was here) to see if he could ketch a bear that had been rootin' round in the corn-field the night before. She expected him back by sundown — by dark any way. 'Les he 'd gone after the bear, and then you could n't tell when he would come.

It appeared that Big Tom was a thriving man in the matter of family. More boys appeared. Only one was married, but four had "got their time." As night approached, and no Wilson, there was a good deal of lively and loud conversation about the stock and the chores, in all of which the girl took a leading and intelligent part, showing a willingness to

do her share, but not to have all the work put upon her. It was time to go down the road and hunt up the cows; the mule had disappeared and must be found before dark; a couple of steers had n't turned up since the day before yesterday, and in the midst of the gentle contention as to whose business all this was, there was an alarm of cattle in the corn-patch, and the girl started off on a run in that direction. It was due to the executive ability of this small girl, after the cows had been milked and the mule chased and the boys properly stirred up, that we had supper. It was of the oil-cloth, iron fork, tin spoon, bacon, hot bread and honey variety, distinguished, however, from all meals we had endured or enjoyed before by the introduction of fried eggs (as the breakfast next morning was by the presence of chicken), and it was served by the active maid with right hearty good will and genuine hospitable intent.

While it was in progress, after nine o'clock, Big Tom arrived, and, with a simple greeting, sat down and attacked the supper and began to tell about the bear. There was not much to tell except that he had n't seen the bear, and that, judged by his tracks and his sloshing around, he must be a big one. But a trap had been set for him, and he judged it would n't be long before we had some bear meat. Big

Tom Wilson, as he is known all over this part of the State, would not attract attention from his size. He is six feet and two inches tall, very spare and muscular, with sandy hair, long gray beard, and honest blue eyes. He has a reputation for great strength and endurance; a man of native simplicity and mild manners. He had been rather expecting us from what Mr. Murchison wrote; he wrote (his son had read out the letter) that Big Tom was to take good care of us, and anybody that Mr. Murchison sent could have the best he 'd got.

Big Tom joined us in our room after supper. This apartment, with two mighty feather beds, was hung about with all manner of stuffy family clothes, and had in one end a vast cavern for a fire. The floor was uneven, and the hearthstones billowy. When the fire was lighted, the effect of the bright light in the cavern and the heavy shadows in the room was Rembrandtish. Big Tom sat with us before the fire and told bear stories. Talk? Why, it was not the least effort. The stream flowed on without a ripple. "Why, the old man," one of the sons confided to us next morning, "can begin and talk right over Mt. Mitchell and all the way back, and never make a break." Though Big Tom had waged a lifelong warfare

with the bears, and taken the hide off at least a hundred of them, I could not see that he had any vindictive feeling towards the varmint, but simply an insatiable love of killing him, and he regarded him in that half humorous light in which the bear always appears to those who study him. As to deer — he could n't tell how many of them he had slain. But Big Tom was a gentle man, he never killed deer for mere sport. With rattlesnakes, now, it was different. There was the skin of one hanging upon a tree by the route we would take in the morning, a buster, he skinned him yesterday. There was an entire absence of braggadocio in Big Tom's talk, but somehow, as he went on, his backwoods figure loomed larger and larger in our imagination, and he seemed strangely familiar. At length it came over us where we had met him before. It was in Cooper's novels. He was the Leather-Stocking exactly. And yet he was an original; for he assured us that he had never read the Leather-Stocking Tales. What a figure, I was thinking, he must have made in the late war! Such a shot, such a splendid physique, such iron endurance! I almost dreaded to hear his tales of the havoc he had wrought on the Union army. Yes, he was in the war, he was sixteen months in the Confederate army, this Homeric man. In what rank? "Oh, I was a fifer!"

But hunting and war did not by any means occupy the whole of Big Tom's life. He was also engaged in "lawin'." He had a long time feud with a neighbor about a piece of land and alleged trespass, and they 'd been "lawin'" for years, with no definite result; but as a topic of conversation it was as fully illustrative of frontier life as the bear-fighting.

Long after we had all gone to bed, we heard Big Tom's continuous voice, through the thin partition that separated us from the kitchen, going on to his little boy about the bear; every circumstance of how he tracked him, and what corner of the field he entered, and where he went out, and his probable size and age, and the prospect of his coming again; these were the details of real every-day life, and worthy to be dwelt on by the hour. The boy was never tired of pursuing them. And Big Tom was just a big boy also in his delight in it all.

Perhaps it was the fascination of Big Tom, perhaps the representation that we were already way off the Big Ivy route, and that it would in fact save time to go over the mountain, and we could ride all the way, that made the Professor acquiesce, with no protest worth noticing, in the preparations that went on, as by a natural assumption, for going over Mitchell. At any rate, there was an early breakfast,

luncheon was put up, and by half past seven we were riding up the Caney — a half-cloudy day — Big Tom swinging along on foot ahead, talking nineteen to the dozen. There was a delightful freshness in the air, the dew-laden bushes, and the smell of the forest. In half an hour we called at the hunting shanty of Mr. Murchison, wrote our names on the wall, according to custom, and regretted that we could not stay for a day in that retreat, and try the speckled trout. Making our way through the low growth and bushes of the valley, we came into a fine open forest, watered by a noisy brook, and after an hour's easy going reached the serious ascent.

From Wilson's to the peak of Mitchell it is seven and a half miles; we made it in five and a half hours. A bridle path was cut years ago, but it has been entirely neglected. It is badly washed, it is stony, muddy, and great trees have fallen across it which wholly block the way for horses. At these places long detours were necessary, on steep hillsides and through gullies, over treacherous sink-holes in the rocks, through quaggy places, heaps of brush, and rotten logs. Those who have ever attempted to get horses over such ground will not wonder at the slow progress we made. Before we were half-way up the ascent, we realized the folly of

attempting it on horseback; but then to go on seemed as easy as to go back. The way also was exceedingly steep in places, and what with roots, and logs, and slippery rocks and stones, it was a desperate climb for the horses.

What a magnificent forest! Oaks, chestnuts, poplars, hemlocks, the cucumber (a species of magnolia, with a pinkish, cucumber-like cone), and all sorts of northern and southern growths meeting here in splendid array. And this gigantic forest, with little diminution in size of trees, continued two thirds of the way up. We marked, as we went on, the maple, the black walnut, the buckeye, the hickory, the locust, and the guide pointed out in one section the largest cherry-trees we had ever seen; splendid trunks, each worth a large sum if it could be got to market. After the great trees were left behind, we entered a garden of white birches, and then a plateau of swamp, thick with raspberry bushes, and finally the ridges, densely crowded with the funereal black balsam.

Half-way up, Big Tom showed us his favorite, the biggest tree he knew. It was a poplar, or tulip. It stands more like a column than a tree, rising high into the air, with scarcely a perceptible taper, perhaps sixty, more likely a hundred, feet before it puts out a limb. Its

girth six feet from the ground is thirty-two feet! I think it might be called Big Tom. It stood here, of course, a giant, when Columbus sailed from Spain, and perhaps some sentimental traveler will attach the name of Columbus to it.

In the woods there was not much sign of animal life, scarcely the note of a bird, but we noticed as we rode along in the otherwise primeval silence a loud and continuous humming overhead, almost like the sound of the wind in pine tops. It was the humming of bees! The upper branches were alive with these industrious toilers, and Big Tom was always on the alert to discover and mark a bee-gum, which he could visit afterwards. Honey hunting is one of his occupations. Collecting spruce gum is another, and he was continually hacking off with his hatchet knobs of the translucent secretion. How rich and fragrant are these forests! The rhododendron was still in occasional bloom, and flowers of brilliant hue gleamed here and there.

The struggle was more severe as we neared the summit, and the footing worse for the horses. Occasionally it was safest to dismount and lead them up slippery ascents; but this was also dangerous, for it was difficult to keep them from treading on our heels, in their

frantic flounderings, in the steep, wet, narrow, brier-grown path. At one uncommonly pokerish place, where the wet rock sloped into a bog, the rider of Jack thought it prudent to dismount, but big Tom insisted that Jack would "make it" all right, only give him his head. The rider gave him his head, and the next minute Jack's four heels were in the air, and he came down on his side in a flash. The rider fortunately extricated his leg without losing it, Jack scrambled out with a broken shoe, and the two limped along. It was a wonder that the horses' legs were not broken a dozen times.

As we approached the top, Big Tom pointed out the direction, a half mile away, of a small pond, a little mountain tarn, overlooked by a ledge of rock, where Professor Mitchell lost his life. Big Tom was the guide that found his body. That day as we sat on the summit he gave in great detail the story, the general outline of which is well known.

The first effort to measure the height of the Black Mountains was made in 1835, by Professor Elisha Mitchell, professor of mathematics and chemistry in the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Mr. Mitchell was a native of Connecticut, born in Washington, Litchfield County, in 1793; graduated at Yale, ordained a Presbyterian minister, and was for

a time state surveyor; and became a professor at Chapel Hill in 1818. He first ascertained and published the fact that the Black Mountains are the highest land east of the Rocky Mountains. In 1844 he visited the locality again. Measurements were subsequently made by Professor Guyot and by Senator Clingman. One of the peaks was named for the senator (the one next in height to Mitchell is described as Clingman on the state map), and a dispute arose as to whether Mitchell had really visited and measured the highest peak. Senator Clingman still maintains that he did not, and that the peak now known as Mitchell is the one that Clingman first described. The estimates of altitudes made by the three explorers named differed considerably. The height now fixed for Mt. Mitchell is 6711; that of Mt. Washington is 6285. There are twelve peaks in this range higher than Mt. Washington, and if we add those in the Great Smoky Mountains which overtop it, there are some twenty in this State higher than the granite giant of New Hampshire.

In order to verify his statement, Professor Mitchell (then in his sixty-fourth year) made a third ascent in June, 1857. He was alone, and went up from the Swannanoa side. He did not return. No anxiety was felt for two

or three days, as he was a good mountaineer, and it was supposed he had crossed the mountain and made his way out by the Caney River. But when several days passed without tidings of him, a search party was formed. Big Tom Wilson was with it. They explored the mountain in all directions unsuccessfully. At length Big Tom separated himself from his companions and took a course in accordance with his notion of that which would be pursued by a man lost in the clouds or the darkness. He soon struck the trail of the wanderer, and, following it, discovered Mitchell's body lying in a pool at the foot of a rocky precipice some thirty feet high. It was evident that Mitchell, making his way along the ridge in darkness or fog, had fallen off. It was the ninth (or the eleventh) day of his disappearance, but in the pure mountain air the body had suffered no change. Big Tom brought his companions to the place, and on consultation it was decided to leave the body undisturbed till Mitchell's friends could be present. There was some talk of burying him on the mountain, but the friends decided otherwise, and the remains, with much difficulty, were got down to Asheville and there interred.

Some years afterwards, I believe at the instance of a society of scientists, it was resolved

to transport the body to the summit of Mt. Mitchell; for the tragic death of the explorer had forever settled in the popular mind the name of the mountain. The task was not easy. A road had to be cut, over which a sledge could be hauled, and the hardy mountaineers who undertook the removal were three days in reaching the summit with their burden. The remains were accompanied by a considerable concourse, and the last rites on the top were participated in by a hundred or more scientists and prominent men from different parts of the State. Such a strange cortége had never before broken the silence of this lonely wilderness, nor was ever burial more impressive than this wild interment above the clouds.

We had been preceded in our climb all the way by a huge bear. That he was huge, a lunker, a monstrous old varmint, Big Tom knew by the size of his tracks; that he was making the ascent that morning ahead of us, Big Tom knew by the freshness of the trail. We might come upon him at any moment, he might be in the garden, was quite likely to be found in the raspberry patch. That we did not encounter him I am convinced was not the fault of Big Tom, but of the bear.

After a struggle of five hours we emerged from the balsams and briers into a lovely open

meadow, of lush clover, timothy, and blue grass. We unsaddled the horses and turned them loose to feed in it. The meadow sloped up to a belt of balsams and firs, a steep rocky knob, and climbing that on foot we stood upon the summit of Mitchell at one o'clock. We were none too soon, for already the clouds were preparing for what appears to be a daily storm at this season.

The summit is a nearly level spot of some thirty or forty feet in extent either way, with a floor of rock and loose stones. The stunted balsams have been cut away so as to give a view. The sweep of prospect is vast, and we could see the whole horizon except in the direction of Roan, whose long bulk was enveloped in cloud. Portions of six States were in sight, we were told, but that is merely a geographical expression. What we saw, wherever we looked, was an inextricable tumble of mountains, without order or leading line of direction, — domes, peaks, ridges, endless and countless, everywhere, some in shadow, some tipped with shafts of sunlight, all wooded and green or black, and all in more softened contours than our Northern hills, but still wild, lonesome, terrible. Away in the southwest, lifting themselves up in a gleam of the western sky, the Great Smoky Mountains loomed

like a frowning continental fortress, sullen and remote. With Clingman and Gibbs and Holdback peaks near at hand and apparently of equal height, Mitchell seemed only a part and not separate from the mighty congregation of giants.

In the centre of the stony plot on the summit lie the remains of Mitchell. To dig a grave in the rock was impracticable, but the loose stones were scooped away to the depth of a foot or so, the body was deposited, and the stones were replaced over it. It was the original intention to erect a monument, but the enterprise of the projectors of this royal entombment failed at that point. The grave is surrounded by a low wall of loose stones, to which each visitor adds one, and in the course of ages the cairn may grow to a good size. The explorer lies there without name or headstone to mark his awful resting-place. The mountain is his monument. He is alone with its majesty. He is there in the clouds, in the tempests, where the lightnings play, and thunders leap, amid the elemental tumult, in the occasional great calm and silence and the pale sunlight. It is the most majestic, the most lonesome grave on earth.

As we sat there, awed a little by this presence, the clouds were gathering from various

quarters and drifting towards us. We could watch the process of thunderstorms and the manufacture of tempests. I have often noticed on other high mountains how the clouds, forming like genii released from the earth, mount into the upper air, and in masses of torn fragments of mist hurry across the sky as to a rendezvous of witches. This was a different display. These clouds came slowly sailing from the distant horizon, like ships on an aerial voyage. Some were below us, some on our level; they were all in well-defined, distinct masses, molten silver on deck, below trailing rain, and attended on earth by gigantic shadows that moved with them. This strange fleet of battle-ships, drifted by the shifting currents, was manœuvring for an engagement. One after another, as they came into range about our peak of observation, they opened fire. Sharp flashes of lightning darted from one to the other; a jet of flame from one leaped across the interval and was buried in the bosom of its adversary; and at every discharge the boom of great guns echoed through the mountains. It was something more than a royal salute to the tomb of the mortal at our feet, for the masses of cloud were rent in the fray, at every discharge the rain was precipitated in increasing torrents, and soon the vast hulks

were trailing torn fragments and wreaths of mist, like the shot-away shrouds and sails of ships in battle. Gradually, from this long range practice with single guns and exchange of broadsides, they drifted into closer conflict, rushed together, and we lost sight of the individual combatants in the general tumult of this aerial war.

We had barely twenty minutes for our observations, when it was time to go, and had scarcely left the peak when the clouds enveloped it. We hastened down under the threatening sky to the saddles and the luncheon. Just off from the summit, amid the rocks, is a complete arbor, or tunnel, of rhododendrons. This cavernous place a Western writer has made the scene of a desperate encounter between Big Tom and a catamount, or American panther, which had been caught in a trap and dragged it there, pursued by Wilson. It is an exceedingly graphic narrative, and is enlivened by the statement that Big Tom had the night before drunk up all the whiskey of the party which had spent the night on the summit. Now Big Tom assured us that the whiskey part of the story was an invention; he was not (which is true) in the habit of using it; if he ever did take any it might be a drop on Mitchell; in fact, when he inquired if we had

a flask, he remarked that a taste of it would do him good then and there. We regretted the lack of it in our baggage. But what inclined Big Tom to discredit the Western writer's story altogether was the fact that he never in his life had had a difficulty with a catamount, and never had seen one in these mountains.

Our lunch was eaten in haste. Big Tom refused the chicken he had provided for us, and strengthened himself with slices of raw salt pork, which he cut from a hunk with his clasp-knife. We caught and saddled our horses, who were reluctant to leave the rich feed, enveloped ourselves in waterproofs, and got into the stony path for the descent just as the torrent came down. It did rain. It lightened, the thunder crashed, the wind howled and twisted the tree-tops. It was as if we were pursued by the avenging spirits of the mountains for our intrusion. Such a tempest on this height had its terrors even for our hardy guide. He preferred to be lower down while it was going on. The crash and reverberation of the thunder did not trouble us so much as the swish of the wet branches in our faces and the horrible road, with its mud, tripping roots, loose stones, and slippery rocks. Progress was slow. The horses were in momentary danger of breaking their legs. For the first hour there was not much

descent. In the clouds we were passing over Clingman, Gibbs, and Holdback. The rain had ceased, but the mist still shut off all view, if any had been attainable, and bushes and path were deluged. The descent was more uncomfortable than the ascent, and we were compelled a good deal of the way to lead the jaded horses down the slippery rocks.

From the peak to the Widow Patten's, where we proposed to pass the night, is twelve miles, a distance we rode or scrambled down, every step of the road bad, in five and a half hours. Half-way down we came out upon a cleared place, a farm, with fruit-trees and a house in ruins. Here had been a summer hotel, much resorted to before the war, but now abandoned. Above it we turned aside for the view from Elizabeth rock, named from the daughter of the proprietor of the hotel, who often sat here, said Big Tom, before she went out of this world. It is a bold rocky ledge, and the view from it, looking south, is unquestionably the finest, the most pleasing and picture-like, we found in these mountains. In the foreground is the deep gorge of a branch of the Swannanoa, and opposite is the great wall of the Blue Ridge (the Blue Ridge is the most capricious and inexplicable system) making off to the Blacks. The depth of the gorge, the sweep

of the sky line, and the reposeful aspect of the scene to the sunny south made this view both grand and charming. Nature does not always put the needed dash of poetry into her extensive prospects.

Leaving this clearing and the now neglected spring, where fashion used to slake its thirst, we zigzagged down the mountain side through a forest of trees growing at every step larger and nobler, and at length struck a small stream, the North Fork of the Swannanoa, which led us to the first settlement. Just at night, — it was nearly seven o'clock, — we entered one of the most stately forests I have ever seen, and rode for some distance in an alley of rhododendrons that arched overhead and made a bower. It was like an aisle in a temple; high overhead was the sombre, leafy roof, supported by gigantic columns. Few widows have such an avenue of approach to their domain as the Widow Patten has.

Cheering as this outcome was from the day's struggle and storm, the Professor seemed sunk in a profound sadness. The auguries which the Friend drew from these signs of civilization of a charming inn and a royal supper did not lighten the melancholy of his mind. "Alas," he said, —

" Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,
And make me travel forth without my cloak,
To let base clouds o'ertake me in my way,
Hiding thy bravery in their rotten smoke ?
'T is not enough that through the cloud thou break,
To dry the rain on my storm-beaten face,
For no man well of such a salve can speak
That heals the wound, and cures not the disgrace :
Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief :
Though thou repent, yet I have still the loss."

"Loss of what?" cried the Friend, as he whipped up his halting steed.

"Loss of self-respect. I feel humiliated that I consented to climb this mountain."

"Nonsense! You 'll live to thank me for it, as the best thing you ever did. It 's over and done now, and you 've got it to tell your friends."

"That 's just the trouble. They 'll ask me if I went up Mitchell, and I shall have to say I did. My character for consistency is gone. Not that I care much what they think, but my own self-respect is gone. I never believed I would do it. A man can't afford to lower himself in his own esteem, at my time of life."

The Widow Patten's was only an advanced settlement in this narrow valley on the mountain side, but a little group of buildings, a fence, and a gate gave it the air of a place, and it had once been better cared for than it is now. Few travelers pass that way, and the art

of entertaining, if it ever existed, is fallen into desuetude. We unsaddled at the veranda, and sat down to review our adventure, make the acquaintance of the family, and hear the last story from Big Tom. The mountaineer, though wet, was as fresh as a daisy, and fatigue in no wise checked the easy, cheerful flow of his talk. He was evidently a favorite with his neighbors, and not unpleasantly conscious of the extent of his reputation. But he encountered here another social grade. The Widow Patten was highly connected. We were not long in discovering that she was an Alexander. She had been a schoolmate of Senator Vance — "Zeb Vance" he still was to her — and the senator and his wife had stayed at her house. I wish I could say that the supper, for which we waited till nine o'clock, was as "highly connected" as the landlady. It was, however, a supper that left its memory. We were lodged in a detached house, which we had to ourselves, where a roaring wood fire made amends for other things lacking. It was necessary to close the doors to keep out the wandering cows and pigs, and I am bound to say that, notwithstanding the voices of the night, we slept there the sleep of peace.

In the morning a genuine surprise awaited us; it seemed impossible, but the breakfast

was many degrees worse than the supper; and when we paid our bill, large for the region, we were consoled by the thought that we paid for the high connection as well as for the accommodations. This is a regular place of entertainment, and one is at liberty to praise it without violation of delicacy.

The broken shoe of Jack required attention, and we were all the morning hunting a blacksmith, as we rode down the valley. Three blacksmith's shanties were found, and after long waiting to send for the operator it turned out in each case that he had no shoes, no nails, no iron to make either of. We made a détour of three miles to what was represented as a regular shop. The owner had secured the service of a colored blacksmith for a special job, and was not inclined to accommodate us; he had no shoes, no nails. But the colored blacksmith, who appreciated the plight we were in, offered to make a shoe, and to crib four nails from those he had laid aside for a couple of mules; and after a good deal of delay, we were enabled to go on. The incident shows, as well as anything, the barrenness and shiftlessness of the region. A horseman with whom we rode in the morning gave us a very low estimate of the trustworthiness of the inhabitants. The valley is wild and very pretty all the way down

to Colonel Long's, — twelve miles, — but the wretched-looking people along the way live in a wretched manner.

Just before reaching Colonel Long's we forded the stream (here of good size), the bridge having tumbled down, and encountered a party of picnickers under the trees — signs of civilization; a railway station is not far off. Colonel Long's is a typical Southern establishment: a white house, or rather three houses, all of one story, built on to each other as beehives are set in a row, all porches and galleries. No one at home but the cook, a rotund, broad-faced woman, with a merry eye, whose very appearance suggested good cooking and hospitality; the Missis and the children had gone up to the river fishing; the Colonel was somewhere about the place; always was away when he was wanted. Guess he 'd take us in, — mighty fine man the Colonel; and she dispatched a child from a cabin in the rear to hunt him up. The Colonel was a great friend of her folks down to Greenville; they visited here. Law, no, she did n't live here. Was just up here spending the summer, for her health. God-forsaken lot of people up here, poor trash. She would n't stay here a day, but the Colonel was a friend of her folks, the firstest folks in Greenville. Nobody round here

she could 'sociate with. She was a Presbyterian, the folks round here mostly Baptists and Methodists. More style about the Presbyterians. Married? No, she hoped not. She did n't want to support no husband. Got 'nuff to do to take care of herself. That her little girl? No; she 'd only got one child, down to Greenville, just the prettiest boy ever was, as white as anybody. How did she what? reconcile this state of things with not being married and being a Presbyterian? Sho! she liked to carry some religion along; it was mighty handy occasionally, mebbe not all the time. Yes, indeed, she enjoyed her religion.

The Colonel appeared and gave us a most cordial welcome. The fat and merry cook blustered around and prepared a good dinner, memorable for its "light" bread, the first we had seen since Cranberry Forge. The Colonel is in some sense a public man, having been a mail agent, and a Republican. He showed us photographs and engravings of Northern politicians, and had the air of a man who had been in Washington. This was a fine country for any kind of fruit, — apples, grapes, pears; it needed a little Northern enterprise to set things going. The travelers were indebted to the Colonel for a delightful noonday rest, and with regret declined his pressing invitation to pass the night with him.

The ride down the Swannanoa to Asheville was pleasant, through a cultivated region, over a good road. The Swannanoa is, however, a turbid stream. In order to obtain the most impressive view of Asheville we approached it by the way of Beaucatcher Hill, a sharp elevation a mile west of the town. I suppose the name is a corruption of some descriptive French word, but it has long been a favorite resort of the frequenters of Asheville, and it may be traditional that it is a good place to catch beaux. The summit is occupied by a handsome private residence, and from this ridge the view, which has the merit of "bursting" upon the traveler as he comes over the hill, is captivating in its extent and variety. The pretty town of Asheville is seen to cover a number of elevations gently rising out of the valley, and the valley, a rich agricultural region, well watered and fruitful, is completely inclosed by picturesque hills, some of them rising to the dignity of mountains. The most conspicuous of these is Mt. Pisgah, eighteen miles distant to the southwest, a pyramid of the Balsam range, 5757 feet high. Mt. Pisgah, from its shape, is the most attractive mountain in this region.

The sunset light was falling upon the splendid panorama and softening it. The windows of the town gleamed as if on fire. From the

steep slope below came the mingled sounds of children shouting, cattle driven home, and all that hum of life that marks a thickly peopled region preparing for the night. It was the leisure hour of an August afternoon, and Asheville was in all its watering-place gayety, as we reined up at the Swannanoa hotel. A band was playing on the balcony. We had reached ice-water, barbers, waiters, civilization.

IV.

ASHEVILLE, delightful for situation, on small hills that rise above the French Broad below its confluence with the Swannanoa, is a sort of fourteenth cousin to Saratoga. It has no springs, but lying 2250 feet above the sea and in a lovely valley, mountain girt, it has pure atmosphere and an equable climate; and being both a summer and winter resort it has acquired a watering-place air. There are Southerners who declare that it is too hot in summer, and that the complete circuit of mountains shuts out any lively movement of air. But the scenery is so charming and noble, the drives are so varied, the roads so unusually passable for a Southern country, and the facilities for excursions so good, that Asheville is a favorite resort.

Architecturally the place is not remarkable, but its surface is so irregular, there are so many acclivities and deep valleys, that improvements can never obliterate that it is perforce picturesque. It is interesting also, if not pleasing, in its contrasts — the enterprise of taste and

money-making struggling with the *laissez faire* of the South. The negro, I suppose, must be regarded as a conservative element; he has not much inclination to change his clothes or his cabin, and his swarming presence gives a ragged aspect to the new civilization. And to say the truth, the new element of Southern smartness lacks the trim thrift the North is familiar with; though the visitor who needs relaxation is not disposed to quarrel with the easy-going terms on which life is taken.

Asheville, it is needless to say, appeared very gay and stimulating to the riders from the wilderness. The Professor, who does not even pretend to patronize Nature, had his revenge as we strolled about the streets (there is but one of much consideration) immensely entertained by the picturesque contrasts. There were more life and amusement here in five minutes, he declared, than in five days of what people called scenery — the present rage for scenery, any way, being only a fashion and a modern invention. The Friend suspected from this penchant for the city that the Professor must have been brought up in the country.

There was a kind of predetermined and willful gayety about Asheville, however, that is apt to be present in a watering-place, and gave to it the melancholy tone that is always pres-

ent in gay places. We fancied that the lively movement in the streets had an air of unreality. A band of musicians on the balcony of the Swannanoa were scraping and tooting and twanging with a hired air, and on the opposite balcony of the Eagle a rival band echoed and redoubled the perfunctory joyousness. The gayety was contagious: the horses felt it; those that carried light burdens of beauty minced and pranced, the pony in the dog-cart was inclined to dash, the few passing equipages had an air of pleasure; and the people of color, the comely waitress and the slouching corner-loafer, responded to the animation of the festive strains. In the late afternoon the streets were full of people, wagons, carriages, horsemen, all with a holiday air, dashed with African color and humor — the irresponsibility of the most insouciant and humorous race in the world, perhaps more comical than humorous; a mixture of recent civilization and rudeness, peculiar and amusing; a happy coming together, it seemed, of Southern abandon and Northern wealth, though the North was little represented at this season.

As evening came on, the streets, though wanting gas, were still more animated; the shops were open, some very good ones, and the white and black throng increasing, especially

the black, for the negro is preëminently a night bird. In the hotels dancing was promised, the German was announced; on the galleries and in the corridors were groups of young people, a little loud in manner and voice, — the young gentleman, with his over-elaborate manner to ladies in bowing and hat-lifting, and the blooming girls from the lesser Southern cities, with the slight provincial note and yet with the frank and engaging cordiality which is as charming as it is characteristic. I do not know what led the Professor to query if the Southern young women were not superior to the Southern young men, but he is always asking questions nobody can answer. At the Swannanoa were half a dozen bridal couples, readily recognizable by the perfect air they had of having been married a long time. How interesting such young voyagers are, and how interesting they are to each other. Columbus never discovered such a large world as they have to find out and possess each in the other.

Among the attractions of the evening it was difficult to choose. There was a lawn-party advertised at Battery Point (where a fine hotel has since been built), and we walked up to that round knob after dark. It is a hill with a grove, which commands a charming view, and was fortified during the war. We found it illu-

minated with Chinese lanterns, and little tables set about under the trees, laden with cake and ice-cream, offered a chance to the stranger to contribute money for the benefit of the Presbyterian Church. I am afraid it was not a profitable entertainment, for the men seemed to have business elsewhere, but the ladies about the tables made charming groups in the lighted grove. Man is a stupid animal at best, or he would not make it so difficult for the womenkind to scrape together a little money for charitable purposes. But probably the women like this method of raising money better than the direct one.

The evening gayety of the town was well distributed. When we descended to the Court-House Square, a great crowd had collected, black, white, and yellow, about a high platform, upon which four glaring torches lighted up the novel scene, and those who could read might decipher this legend on a standard at the back of the stage: —

HAPPY JOHN.

ONE OF THE SLAVES OF WADE HAMPTON.

COME AND SEE HIM!

Happy John, who occupied the platform with Mary, a "bright" yellow girl, took the comical view of his race, which was greatly en-

joyed by his audience. His face was blackened to the proper color of the stage-darky, and he wore a flaming suit of calico, the trousers and coat striped longitudinally according to Punch's idea of "Uncle Sam," the coat a swallow-tail bound and faced with scarlet, and a bell-crowned white hat. This conceit of a colored Yankee seemed to tickle all colors in the audience amazingly. Mary, the "bright" woman (this is the universal designation of the light mulatto), was a pleasing but bold yellow girl, who wore a natty cap trimmed with scarlet, and had the assured or pert manner of all traveling sawdust performers.

"Oh, yes," exclaimed a bright woman in the crowd, "Happy John was sure enough one of Wade Hampton's slaves, and he's right good looking when he's not blackened up."

Happy John sustained the promise of his name, by spontaneous gayety and enjoyment of the fleeting moment; he had a glib tongue and a ready, rude wit, and talked to his audience with a delicious mingling of impudence, deference, and patronage, commenting upon them generally, administering advice and correction in a strain of humor that kept his hearers in a pleased excitement. He handled the banjo and the guitar alternately, and talked all the time when he was not singing. Mary

(how much harder featured and brazen a woman is in such a position than a man of the same calibre!) sang, in an untutored treble, songs of sentiment, often *risqué*, in solo and in company with John, but with a cold, indifferent air, in contrast to the rollicking enjoyment of her comrade. The favorite song, which the crowd compelled her to repeat, touched lightly the uncertainties of love, expressed in the falsetto pathetic refrain: —

"Mary 's gone away wid de coon."

All this, with the moon, the soft summer night, the mixed crowd of darkies and whites, the stump eloquence of Happy John, the singing, the laughter, the flaring torches, made a wild scene. The entertainment was quite free, with a "collection" occasionally during the performance.

What most impressed us, however, was the turning to account by Happy John of the "nigger" side of the black man as a means of low comedy, and the enjoyment of it by all the people of color. They appeared to appreciate as highly as anybody the comic element in themselves, and Happy John had emphasized it by deepening his natural color and exaggerating the "nigger" peculiarities. I presume none of them analyzed the nature of his infectious gayety, nor thought of the pathos that

lay so close to it, in the fact of his recent slavery, and the distinction of being one of Wade Hampton's niggers, and the melancholy mirth of this light-hearted race's burlesque of itself.

A performance followed which called forth the appreciation of the crowd more than the wit of Happy John or the faded songs of the yellow girl. John took two sweet-cakes and broke each in fine pieces into a saucer, and after sugaring and eulogizing the dry messes, called for two small darky volunteers from the audience to come up on the platform and devour them. He offered a prize of fifteen cents to the one who should first eat the contents of his dish, not using his hands, and hold up the saucer empty in token of his victory. The cake was tempting, and the fifteen cents irresistible, and a couple of boys in ragged shirts and short trousers and a suspender apiece came up shamefacedly to enter for the prize. Each one grasped his saucer in both hands, and with face over the dish awaited the word "go," which John gave and started off the contest with a banjo accompaniment. To pick up with the mouth the dry cake and choke it down was not so easy as the boys apprehended, but they went into the task with all their might, gobbling and swallowing as if they loved cake, occasionally rolling an eye to the

saucer of the contestant to see the relative progress, John strumming, ironically encouraging, and the crowd roaring. As the combat deepened and the contestants strangled and stuffed and sputtered, the crowd went into spasms of laughter. The smallest boy won by a few seconds, holding up his empty saucer, with mouth stuffed, vigorously trying to swallow, like a chicken with his throat clogged with dry meal, and utterly unable to speak. The impartial John praised the victor in mock heroics, but said that the trial was so even that he would divide the prize, ten cents to one and five to the other — a stroke of justice that greatly increased his popularity. And then he dismissed the assembly, saying that he had promised the mayor to do so early, because he did not wish to run an opposition to the political meeting going on in the court-house.

The scene in the large court-room was less animated than that outdoors; a half dozen tallow dips, hung on the wall in sconces and stuck on the judge's long desk, feebly illuminated the mixed crowd of black and white who sat in, and on the backs of, the benches, and cast only a fitful light upon the orator, who paced back and forth and pounded the rail. It was to have been a joint discussion between the two presidential electors running in that district,

but the Republican being absent his place was taken by a young man of the town. The Democratic orator took advantage of the absence of his opponent to describe the discussion of the night before, and to give a portrait of his adversary. He was represented as a cross between a baboon and a jackass, who would be a natural curiosity for Barnum. "I intend," said the orator, "to put him in a cage and exhibit him about the deestrict." This political hit called forth great applause. All his arguments were of this pointed character, and they appeared to be unanswerable. The orator appeared to prove that there was n't a respectable man in the opposite party who was n't an office-holder, nor a white man of any kind in it who was not an office-holder. If there were any issues or principles in the canvass, he paid his audience the compliment of knowing all about them, for he never alluded to any. In another state of society, such a speech of personalities might have led to subsequent shootings, but no doubt his adversary would pay him in the same coin when next they met, and the exhibition seemed to be regarded down here as satisfactory and enlightened political canvassing for votes. The speaker who replied opened his address with a noble tribute to woman (as the first speaker had ended his), directed to a

dozen of that sex who sat in the gloom of a corner. The young man was moderate in his sarcasm, and attempted to speak of national issues, but the crowd had small relish for that sort of thing. At eleven o'clock, when we got away from the unsavory room (more than half the candles had gone out), the orator was making slow headway against the relished blackguardism of the evening. The German was still "on" at the hotel when we ascended to our chamber, satisfied that Asheville was a lively town.

The sojourner at Asheville can amuse himself very well by walking or driving to the many picturesque points of view about the town; livery stables abound, and the roads are good. The Beaucatcher Hill is always attractive; and Connolly's, a private place a couple of miles from town, is ideally situated, being on a slight elevation in the valley commanding the entire circuit of mountains, for it has the air of repose which so seldom is experienced in the location of a dwelling in America whence an extensive prospect is given. Or if the visitor is disinclined to exertion, he may lounge in the rooms of the hospitable Asheville Club; or he may sit on the sidewalk in front of the hotels, and talk with the colonels and judges and generals and ex-members of Congress, the

talk generally drifting to the new commercial and industrial life of the South, and only to politics as it affects these; and he will be pleased, if the conversation takes a reminiscent turn, with the lack of bitterness and the tone of friendliness. The negro problem is commonly discussed philosophically and without heat, but there is always discovered, underneath, the determination that the negro shall never again get the legislative upper hand. And the gentleman from South Carolina who has an upland farm, and is heartily glad slavery is gone, and wants the negro educated, when it comes to ascendency in politics — such as the State once experienced — asks you what you would do yourself. This is not the place to enter upon the politico-social question, but the writer may note one impression gathered from much friendly and agreeable conversation. It is that the Southern whites misapprehend and make a scarecrow of "social equality." When, during the war, it was a question at the North of giving the colored people of the Northern States the ballot, the argument against it used to be stated in the form of a question, "Do you want your daughter to marry a negro?" Well, the negro has his political rights in the North, and there has come no change in the social conditions whatever.

And there is no doubt that the social conditions would remain exactly as they are at the South if the negro enjoyed all the civil rights which the Constitution tries to give him. The most sensible view of this whole question was taken by an intelligent colored man, whose brother was formerly a representative in Congress. "Social equality," he said in effect, "is a humbug. We do not expect it, we do not want it. It does not exist among the blacks themselves. We have our own social degrees, and choose our own associates. We simply want the ordinary civil rights, under which we can live and make our way in peace and amity. This is necessary to our self-respect, and if we have not self-respect, it is not to be supposed that the race can improve. I 'll tell you what I mean. My wife is a modest, intelligent woman, of good manners, and she is always neat, and tastefully dressed. Now, if she goes to take the cars, she is not permitted to go into a clean car with decent people, but is ordered into one that is repellant, and is forced into company that any refined woman would shrink from. But along comes a flauntingly-dressed woman, of known disreputable character, whom my wife would be disgraced to know, and she takes any place that money will buy. It is this sort of thing that hurts."

We took the eastern train one evening to Round Nob (Henry's Station), some thirty miles, in order to see the wonderful railway that descends, a distance of eight miles, from the summit of Swannanoa Gap (2657 feet elevation) to Round Nob hotel (1607 feet). The Swannanoa Summit is the dividing line between the waters that flow to the Atlantic and those that go to the Gulf of Mexico. This fact was impressed upon us by the inhabitants, who derive a good deal of comfort from it. Such divides are always matter of local pride. Unfortunately, perhaps, it was too dark before we reached Henry's to enable us to see the road in all its loops and parallels as it appears on the map, but we gained a better effect. The hotel, when we first sighted it, all its windows blazing with light, was at the bottom of a well. Beside it — it was sufficiently light to see that — a column of water sprang straight into the air to the height, as we learned afterwards from two official sources, of 225 and 265 feet; and the information was added that it is the highest fountain in the world. This stout column, stiff as a flagstaff, with its feathery head of mist gleaming like silver in the failing light, had the most charming effect. We passed out of sight of hotel and fountain, but were conscious of being whirled on a circular descending

grade, and very soon they were in sight again. Again and again they disappeared and came to view, now on one side and now on the other, until our train seemed to be bewitched, making frantic efforts by dodgings and turnings, now through tunnels and now over high pieces of trestle, to escape the inevitable attraction that was gravitating it down to the hospitable lights at the bottom of the well. When we climbed back up the road in the morning we had an opportunity to see the marvelous engineering, but there is little else to see, the view being nearly always very limited.

The hotel at the bottom of the ravine, on the side of Round Nob, offers little in the way of prospect, but it is a picturesque place, and we could understand why it was full of visitors when we came to the table. It was probably the best-kept house of entertainment in the State, and being in the midst of the Black Hills it offers good chances for fishing and mountain climbing.

In the morning the fountain, which is of course artificial, refused to play, the rain in the night having washed in *débris* which clogged the conduit. But it soon freed itself and sent up for a long time, like a sulky geyser, mud and foul water. When it got freedom and tolerable clearness, we noted that the water

went up in pulsations, which were marked at short distances by the water falling off, giving the column the appearance of a spine. The summit, always beating the air in efforts to rise higher, fell over in a veil of mist.

There are certain excursions that the sojourner at Asheville must make. He must ride forty-five miles south through Henderson and Transylvania to Cæsar's Head, on the South Carolina border, where the mountain system abruptly breaks down into the vast Southern plain; where the observer, standing on the edge of the precipice, has behind him and before him the greatest contrast that nature can offer. He must also take the rail to Waynesville, and visit the much frequented White Sulphur Springs, among the Balsam Mountains, and penetrate the Great Smoky range by way of Quallatown, and make the acquaintance of the remnant of Cherokee Indians living on the north slope of Cheoah Mountain. The Professor could have made it a matter of personal merit that he escaped all these encounters with wild and picturesque nature, if his horse had not been too disabled for such long jaunts. It is only necessary, however, to explain to the public that the travelers are not gormandizers of scenery, and were willing to leave some portions of the State to the curiosity of future excursionists.

But so much was said about Hickory Nut Gap that a visit to it could not be evaded. The Gap is about twenty-four miles southeast of Asheville. In the opinion of a well-informed colonel, who urged us to make the trip, it is the finest piece of scenery in this region. We were brought up on the precept, "get the best," and it was with high anticipations that we set out about eleven o'clock one warm, foggy morning. We followed a very good road through a broken, pleasant country, gradually growing wilder and less cultivated. There was heavy rain most of the day on the hills, and occasionally a shower swept across our path. The conspicuous object toward which we traveled all the morning was a shapely conical hill at the beginning of the Gap.

At three o'clock we stopped at the Widow Sherrill's for dinner. Her house, only about a mile from the summit, is most picturesquely situated on a rough slope, giving a wide valley and mountain view. The house is old, rambling, many-roomed, with wide galleries on two sides. If one wanted a retired retreat for a few days, with good air and fair entertainment, this could be commended. It is an excellent fruit region; apples especially are sound and of good flavor. That may be said of all this part of the State. The climate is adapted to apples,

as the hilly part of New England is. I fancy the fruit ripens slowly, as it does in New England, and is not subject to quick decay like much of that grown in the West. But the grape can also be grown in all this mountain region. Nothing but lack of enterprise prevents any farmer from enjoying abundance of fruit. The industry carried on at the moment at the Widow Sherrill's was the artificial drying of apples for the market. The apples are pared, cored, and sliced in spirals, by machinery, and dried on tin sheets in a patented machine. The industry appears to be a profitable one hereabouts, and is about the only one that calls in the aid of invention.

While our dinner was preparing we studied the well-known pictures of "Jane" and "Eliza," the photographs of Confederate boys who had never returned from the war, and the relations, whom the traveling photographers always like to pillory in melancholy couples, and some stray volumes of the Sunday School Union. Madame Sherrill, who carries on the farm since the death of her husband, is a woman of strong and liberal mind, who informed us that she got small comfort in the churches in the neighborhood, and gave us, in fact, a discouraging account of the unvital piety of the region.

The descent from the summit of the Gap to

Judge Logan's, nine miles, is rapid, and the road is wild and occasionally picturesque, following the Broad River, a small stream when we first overtook it, but roaring, rocky, and muddy, owing to frequent rains, and now and then tumbling down in rapids. The noisy stream made the ride animated, and an occasional cabin, a poor farmhouse, a mill, a schoolhouse, a store with an assemblage of lean horses tied to the hitching rails, gave the Professor opportunity for remarks upon the value of life under such circumstances.

The valley which we followed down probably owes its celebrity to the uncommon phenomena of occasional naked rocks and precipices. The inclosing mountains are from 3000 to 4000 feet high, and generally wooded. I do not think that the ravine would be famous in a country where exposed ledges and buttressing walls of rock are common. It is only by comparison with the local scenery that this is remarkable. About a mile above Judge Logan's we caught sight, through the trees, of the famous waterfall. From the top of the high ridge on the right, a nearly perpendicular cascade pours over the ledge of rocks and is lost in the forest. We could see nearly the whole of it, at a great height above us, on the opposite side of the river, and it would require an hour's stiff climb

to reach its foot. From where we viewed it, it seemed a slender and not very important, but certainly a very beautiful cascade, a band of silver in the mass of green foliage. The fall is said to be 1400 feet. Our colonel insists that it is a thousand. It may be, but the valley where we stood is at least at an elevation of 1300 feet; we could not believe that the ridge over which the water pours is much higher than 3000 feet, and the length of the fall certainly did not appear to be a quarter of the height of the mountain from our point of observation. But we had no desire to belittle this pretty cascade, especially when we found that Judge Logan would regard a foot abated from the 1400 as a personal grievance. Mr. Logan once performed the functions of local judge, a Republican appointment, and he sits around the premises now in the enjoyment of that past dignity and of the fact that his wife is postmistress. His house of entertainment is at the bottom of the valley, a place shut in, warm, damp, and not inviting to a long stay, although the region boasts a good many natural curiosities.

It was here that we encountered again the political current, out of which we had been for a month. The Judge himself was reticent, as became a public man, but he had conspicuously posted up a monster prospectus, sent out from

Augusta, of a campaign life of Blaine and Logan, in which the Professor read, with shaking knees, this sentence: "Sure to be the greatest and hottest [campaign and civil battle] ever known in this world. The thunder of the supreme struggle and its reverberations will shake the continents for months, and will be felt from Pole to Pole."

For this and other reasons this seemed a risky place to be in. There was something sinister about the murky atmosphere, and a suspicion of mosquitoes besides. Had there not been other travelers staying here, we should have felt still more uneasy. The house faced Bald Mountain, 4000 feet high, a hill that had a very bad reputation some years ago, and was visited by newspaper reporters. This is in fact the famous Shaking Mountain. For a long time it had a habit of trembling, as if in an earthquake spasm, but with a shivering motion very different from that produced by an earthquake. The only good that came of it was that it frightened all the "moonshiners," and caused them to join the church. It is not reported what became of the church afterwards. It is believed now that the trembling was caused by the cracking of a great ledge on the mountain, which slowly parted asunder. Bald Mountain is the scene of Mrs. Burnett's

delightful story of Louisiana, and of the play of Esmeralda. A rock is pointed out toward the summit, which the beholder is asked to see resembles a hut, and which is called "Esmeralda's Cottage." But this attractive maiden has departed, and we did not discover any woman in the region who remotely answers to her description.

In the morning we rode a mile and a half through the woods and followed up a small stream to see the celebrated pools, one of which the Judge said was two hundred feet deep and another bottomless. These pools, not round, but on one side circular excavations, some twenty feet across, worn in the rock by pebbles, are very good specimens, and perhaps remarkable specimens, of "pot-holes." They are, however, regarded here as one of the wonders of the world. On the way to them we saw beautiful wild trumpet-creepers in blossom, festooning the trees.

The stream that originates in Hickory Nut Gap is the westernmost branch of several forks of the Broad, which unite to the southeast in Rutherford County, flow to Columbia, and reach the Atlantic through the channel of the Santee. It is not to be confounded with the French Broad, which originates among the hills of Transylvania, runs northward past

Asheville, and finds its way to the Tennessee through the Warm Springs Gap in the Bald Mountains. As the French claimed ownership of all the affluents of the Mississippi, this latter was called the French Broad.

It was a great relief the next morning, on our return, to rise out of the lifeless atmosphere of the Gap into the invigorating air at the Widow Sherrill's, whose country-seat is three hundred feet higher than Asheville. It was a day of heavy showers, and apparently of leisure to the scattered population; at every store and mill was a congregation of loafers, who had hitched their scrawny horses and mules to the fences, and had the professional air of the idler and gossip the world over. The vehicles met on the road were a variety of the prairie schooner, long wagons with a top of hoops over which is stretched a cotton cloth. The wagons are without seats, and the canvas is too low to admit of sitting upright, if there were. The occupants crawl in at either end, sit or lie on the bottom of the wagon, and jolt along in shiftless uncomfortableness.

Riding down the French Broad was one of the original objects of our journey. Travelers with the same intention may be warned that the route on horseback is impracticable. The distance to the Warm Springs is thirty-seven

miles; to Marshall, more than half-way, the road is clear, as it runs on the opposite side of the river from the railway, and the valley is something more than river and rails. But below Marshall, the valley contracts, and the rails are laid a good portion of the way in the old stage road. One can walk the track, but to ride a horse over its sleepers and culverts and occasional bridges, and dodge the trains, is neither safe nor agreeable. We sent our horses round, — the messenger taking the risk of leading them, between trains, over the last six or eight miles, — and took the train.

The railway, after crossing a mile or two of meadows, hugs the river all the way. The scenery is the reverse of bold. The hills are low, monotonous in form, and the stream winds through them, with many a pretty turn and "reach," with scarcely a ribbon of room to spare on either side. The river is shallow, rapid, stony, muddy, full of rocks, with an occasional little island covered with low bushes. The rock seems to be a clay formation, rotten and colored. As we approach Warm Springs the scenery becomes a little bolder, and we emerge into the open space about the Springs through a narrower defile, guarded by rocks that are really picturesque in color and splintered decay, one of them being known, of course,

as the "Lover's Leap," a name common in every part of the modern or ancient world where there is a settlement near a precipice, with always the same legend attached to it.

There is a little village at Warm Springs, but the hotel — since burned and rebuilt — (which may be briefly described as a palatial shanty) stands by itself close to the river, which is here a deep, rapid, turbid stream. A bridge once connected it with the road on the opposite bank, but it was carried away three or four years ago, and its ragged butments stand as a monument of procrastination, while the stream is crossed by means of a flat-boat and a cable. In front of the hotel, on the slight slope to the river, is a meagre grove of locusts. The famous spring, close to the stream, is marked only by a rough box of wood and an iron pipe, and the water, which has a temperature of about one hundred degrees, runs to a shabby bath-house below, in which is a pool for bathing. The bath is very agreeable, the tepid water being singularly soft and pleasant. It has a slightly sulphurous taste. Its good effects are much certified. The grounds, which might be very pretty with care, are ill-kept and slatternly, strewn with débris, as if everything was left to the easy-going nature of the servants. The main house is of brick, with

verandas and galleries all round, and a colonnade of thirteen huge brick and stucco columns, in honor of the thirteen States, a relic of post-Revolutionary times, when the house was the resort of Southern fashion and romance. These columns have stood through one fire, and perhaps the recent one, which swept away the rest of the structure. The house is extended in a long wooden edifice, with galleries and outside stairs, the whole front being nearly seven hundred feet long. In a rear building is a vast, barrack-like dining-room, with a noble ball-room above, for dancing is the important occupation of visitors.

The situation is very pretty, and the establishment has a picturesqueness of its own. Even the ugly little brick structure near the bath-house imposes upon one as Wade Hampton's cottage. No doubt we liked the place better than if it had been smart, and enjoyed the *negligé* condition, and the easy terms on which life is taken there. There was a sense of abundance in the sight of fowls tiptoeing about the verandas, and to meet a chicken in the parlor was a sort of guarantee that we should meet him later on in the dining-room. There was nothing incongruous in the presence of pigs, turkeys, and chickens on the grounds; they went along with the good-natured negro-

service and the general hospitality; and we had a mental rest in the thought that all the gates would have been off the hinges, if there had been any gates. The guests were very well treated indeed, and were put under no sort of restraint by discipline. The long colonnade made an admirable promenade and lounging-place and point of observation. It was interesting to watch the groups under the locusts, to see the management of the ferry, the mounting and dismounting of the riding-parties, and to study the colors on the steep hill opposite, halfway up which was a neat cottage and flower-garden. The type of people was very pleasantly Southern. Colonels and politicians stand in groups and tell stories, which are followed by explosions of laughter; retire occasionally into the saloon, and come forth reminded of more stories, and all lift their hats elaborately and suspend the narratives when a lady goes past. A company of soldiers from Richmond had pitched its tents near the hotel, and in the evening the ball-room was enlivened with uniforms. Among the graceful dancers — and every one danced well, and with spirit — was pointed out the young widow of a son of Andrew Johnson, whose pretty cottage overlooks the village. But the Professor, to whom this information was communicated, doubted

whether here it was not a greater distinction to be the daughter of the owner of this region than to be connected with a President of the United States.

A certain air of romance and tradition hangs about the French Broad and the Warm Springs, which the visitor must possess himself of in order to appreciate either. This was the great highway of trade and travel. At certain seasons there was an almost continuous procession of herds of cattle and sheep passing to the Eastern markets, and of trains of big wagons wending their way to the inviting lands watered by the Tennessee. Here came in the summer time the Southern planters in coach and four, with a great retinue of household servants, and kept up for months that unique social life, a mixture of courtly ceremony and entire freedom, — the civilization which had the drawing-room at one end and the negro-quarters at the other, — which has passed away. It was a continuation into our own restless era of the manners and the literature of George the Third, with the accompanying humor and happy-go-lucky decadence of the negro slaves. On our way down we saw on the river bank, under the trees, the old hostelry, Alexander's, still in decay, — an attractive tavern, that was formerly one of the notable stopping-places on the

river. Master, and fine lady, and obsequious, larking darky, and lumbering coach, and throng of pompous and gay life have all disappeared. There was no room in this valley for the old institutions and for the iron track.

> "When in the chronicle of wasted time
> I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
> And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
> In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights, . . .
> We, which now behold these present days,
> Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise."

This perverted use of noble verse was all the response the Friend got in his attempt to drop into the sentimental vein over the past of the French Broad.

The reader must not think there is no enterprise in this sedative and idle resort. The conceited Yankee has to learn that it is not he alone who can be accused of the thrift of craft. There is at the Warm Springs a thriving mill for crushing and pulverizing barytes, known vulgarly as heavy-spar. It is the weight of this heaviest of minerals, and not its lovely crystals, that gives it value. The rock is crushed, washed, sorted out by hand, to remove the foreign substances, then ground and subjected to acids, and at the end of the process it is as white and fine as the best bolted flour. This heavy adulterator is shipped to the North

in large quantities, — the manager said he had recently an order for a hundred thousand dollars' worth of it. What is the use of this powder? Well, it is of use to the dealer who sells white lead for paint, to increase the weight of the lead, and it is the belief hereabouts that it is mixed with powdered sugar. The industry is profitable to those engaged in it.

It was impossible to get much information about our route into Tennessee, except that we should go by Paint Rock, and cross Paint Mountain. Late one morning — a late start is inevitable here — accompanied by a cavalcade, we crossed the river by the rope ferry, and trotted down the pretty road, elevated above the stream and tree-shaded, offering always charming glimpses of swift water and overhanging foliage (the railway obligingly taking the other side of the river), to Paint Rock, — six miles. This Paint Rock is a naked precipice by the roadside, perhaps sixty feet high, which has a large local reputation. It is said that its face shows painting done by the Indians, and hieroglyphics which nobody can read. On this bold, crumbling cliff, innumerable visitors have written their names. We stared at it a good while to discover the paint and hieroglyphics, but could see nothing except iron stains. Round the corner is a farmhouse

and place of call for visitors, a neat cottage, with a display of shells and minerals and flower-pots; and here we turned north, crossed the little stream called Paint River, the only clear water we had seen in a month, passed into the State of Tennessee, and by a gentle ascent climbed Paint Mountain. The open forest road, with the murmur of the stream below, was delightfully exhilarating, and as we rose the prospect opened, — the lovely valley below, Bald Mountains behind us, and the Butt Mountains rising as we came over the ridge.

Nobody on the way, none of the frowzy women or unintelligent men, knew anything of the route, or could give us any information of the country beyond. But as we descended in Tennessee the country and the farms decidedly improved, — apple-trees and a grapevine now and then.

A ride of eight miles brought us to Waddle's, hungry and disposed to receive hospitality. We passed by an old farm building to a new two-storied, gayly painted house on a hill. We were deceived by appearances. The new house, with a new couple in it, had nothing to offer us, except some buttermilk. Why should anybody be obliged to feed roving strangers? As to our horses, the young woman with a baby in her arms declared, —

"We 've got nothing for stock but roughness; perhaps you can get something at the other house."

"Roughness," we found out at the other house, meant hay in this region. We procured for the horses a light meal of green oats, and for our own dinner we drank at the brook and the Professor produced a few sonnets. On this sustaining repast we fared on nearly twelve miles further, through a rolling, good farming country, offering little for comment, in search of a night's lodging with one of the brothers Snap. But one brother declined our company on the plea that his wife was sick, and the other because his wife lived in Greenville, and we found ourselves as dusk came on without shelter in a tavernless land. Between the two refusals we enjoyed the most picturesque bit of scenery of the day, at the crossing of Camp Creek, a swift little stream, that swirled round under the ledge of bold rocks before the ford. This we learned was a favorite camp-meeting ground. Mary was calling the cattle home at the farm of the second Snap. It was a very peaceful scene of rural life, and we were inclined to tarry, but Mary, instead of calling us home with the cattle, advised us to ride on to Alexander's before it got dark.

It is proper to say that at Alexander's we

began to see what this pleasant and fruitful country might be, and will be, with thrift and intelligent farming. Mr. Alexander is a well-to-do farmer, with plenty of cattle and good barns (always an evidence of prosperity), who owes his success to industry and an open mind to new ideas. He was a Unionist during the war, and is a Democrat now, though his county (Greene) has been Republican. We had been riding all the afternoon through good land, and encountering a better class of farmers. Peach-trees abounded (though this was an off year for fruit), and apples and grapes thrive. It is a land of honey and of milk. The persimmon flourishes; and, sign of abundance generally, we believe, great flocks of turkey-buzzards — majestic floaters in the high air — hovered about. This country was ravaged during the war by Unionists and Confederates alternately, the impartial patriots as they passed scooping in corn, bacon, and good horses, leaving the farmers little to live on. Mr. Alexander's farm cost him forty dollars an acre, and yields good crops of wheat and maize. This was the first house on our journey where at breakfast we had grace before meat, though there had been many tables that needed it more. From the door the noble range of the Big Bald is in sight and not dis-

tant; and our host said he had a shanty on it, to which he was accustomed to go with his family for a month or six weeks in the summer and enjoy a real primitive woods life.

Refreshed by this little touch of civilization, and with horses well fed, we rode on next morning towards Jonesboro, over a rolling, rather unpicturesque country, but ennobled by the Big Bald and Butt ranges, which we had on our right all day. At noon we crossed the Nollechucky River at a ford where the water was up to the saddle girth, broad, rapid, muddy, and with a treacherous stony bottom, and came to the little hamlet of Boylesville, with a flour-mill, and a hospitable old-fashioned house, where we found shelter from the heat of the hot day, and where the daughters of the house, especially one pretty girl in a short skirt and jaunty cap, contradicted the currently received notion that this world is a weary pilgrimage. The big parlor, with its photographs and stereoscope, and bits of shell and mineral, a piano and a melodeon, and a coveted old sideboard of mahogany, recalled rural New England. Perhaps these refinements are due to the Washington College (a school for both sexes), which is near. We noted at the tables in this region a singular use of the word fruit. When we were asked, "Will you have some

of the fruit?" and said Yes, we always got apple-sauce.

Ten miles more in the late afternoon brought us to Jonesboro, the oldest town in the State, a pretty place, with a flavor of antiquity, set picturesquely on hills, with the great mountains in sight. People from further South find this an agreeable summering place, and a fair hotel, with odd galleries in front and rear, did not want company. The Warren Institute for negroes has been flourishing here ever since the war.

A ride of twenty miles next day carried us to Union. Before noon we forded the Wetauga, a stream not so large as the Nollechucky, and were entertained at the big brick house of Mr. Devault, a prosperous and hospitable farmer. This is a rich country. We had met in the morning wagon-loads of water-melons and musk-melons, on the way to Jonesboro, and Mr. Devault set abundance of these refreshing fruits before us as we lounged on the porch before dinner.

It was here that we made the acquaintance of a colored woman, a withered, bent old pensioner of the house, whose industry (she excelled any modern patent apple-parer) was unabated, although she was by her own confession (a woman, we believe, never owns her age

till she has passed this point) and the testimony of others a hundred years old. But age had not impaired the brightness of her eyes, nor the limberness of her tongue, nor her shrewd good sense. She talked freely about the want of decency and morality in the young colored folks of the present day. It was n't so when she was a girl. Long, long time ago, she and her husband had been sold at sheriff's sale and separated, and she never had another husband. Not that she blamed her master so much — he could n't help it, he got in debt. And she expounded her philosophy about the rich and the danger they are in. The great trouble is that when a person is rich he can borrow money so easy, and he keeps drawin' it out of the bank and pilin' up the debt, like rails on top of one another, till it needs a ladder to get on to the pile, and then it all comes down in a heap, and the man has to begin on the bottom rail again. If she 'd to live her life over again, she 'd lay up money; never cared much about it till now. The thrifty, shrewd old woman still walked about a good deal, and kept her eye on the neighborhood. Going out that morning she had seen some fence up the road that needed mending, and she told Mr. Devault that she did n't like such shiftlessness; she did n't know as white folks was much bet-

ter than colored folks. Slavery? Yes, slavery was pretty bad — she had seen five hundred niggers in handcuffs, all together in a field, sold to be sent South.

About six miles from here is a beech grove of historical interest, worth a visit if we could have spared the time. In it is the large beech (six and a half feet around, six feet from the ground) on which Daniel Boone shot a bear, when he was a rover in this region. He himself cut an inscription on the tree recording his prowess, and it is still distinctly legible: —

D. BOONE CILT A BAR ON THIS TREE, 1760.

This tree is a place of pilgrimage, and names of people from all parts of the country are cut on it, until there is scarcely room for any more records of such devotion. The grove is ancient looking, the trees are gnarled and moss-grown. Hundreds of people go there, and the trees are carved all over with their immortal names.

A pleasant ride over a rich rolling country, with an occasional strip of forest, brought us to Union in the evening, with no other adventure than the meeting of a steam threshing-machine in the road, with steam up, clattering along. The devil himself could not invent any machine calculated to act on the nerves of a horse like this. Jack took one look and then dashed

into the woods, scraping off his rider's hat, but did not succeed in getting rid of his burden or knocking down any trees.

Union, on the railway, is the forlornest of little villages, with some three hundred inhabitants and a forlorn hotel, kept by an ex-stage-driver. The village, which lies on the Holstein, has no drinking-water in it nor enterprise enough to bring it in; not a well nor a spring in its limits; and for drinking-water everybody crosses the river to a spring on the other side. A considerable part of the labor of the town is fetching water over the bridge. On a hill overlooking the village is a big, pretentious brick house, with a tower, the furniture of which is an object of wonder to those who have seen it. It belonged to the late Mrs. Stover, daughter of Andrew Johnson. The whole family of the ex-President have departed this world, but his memory is still green in this region, where he was almost worshiped — so the people say in speaking of him.

Forlorn as the hotel was at Union, the landlord's daughters were beginning to draw the lines in rural refinement. One of them had been at school in Abingdon. Another, a mature young lady of fifteen, who waited on the table, in the leisure after supper, asked the Friend for a light for her cigarette, which she had deftly rolled.

"Why do you smoke?"

"So as I sha'n't get into the habit of dipping. Do you think dipping is nice?"

The traveler was compelled to say that he did not, though he had seen a good deal of it wherever he had been.

"All the girls dips round here. But me and my sisters rather smoke than get in a habit of dipping."

To the observation that Union seemed to be a dull place: —

"Well, there 's gay times here in the winter — dancing. Like to dance! Well, I should say. Last winter I went over to Blountsville to a dance in the court-house; there was a trial between Union and Blountsville for the best dancing. You bet I brought back the cake and the blue ribbon."

The country was becoming too sophisticated, and the travelers hastened to the end of their journey. The next morning Bristol, at first over a hilly country with magnificent oak-trees, — happily not girdled as these stately monarchs were often seen along the roads in North Carolina, — and then up Beaver Creek, a turbid stream, turning some mills. When a closed woolen factory was pointed out to the Professor (who was still traveling for Reform) as the result of the agitation in Congress, he said Yes,

the effect of agitation was evident in all the decayed dams and ancient abandoned mills we had seen in the past month.

Bristol is mainly one long street, with some good stores, but generally shabby, and on this hot morning sleepy. One side of the street is in Tennessee, the other in Virginia. How handy for fighting this would have been in the war, if Tennessee had gone out and Virginia stayed in. At the hotel — may a kind Providence wake it up to its responsibilities — we had the pleasure of reading one of those facetious hand-bills which the great railway companies of the West scatter about, the serious humor of which is so pleasing to our English friends. This one was issued by the accredited agents of the Ohio and Mississippi Railway, and dated April 1, 1984. One sentence will suffice: —

"Allow us to thank our old traveling friends for the many favors in our line, and if you are going on your bridal trip, or to see your girl out West, drop in at the general office of the Ohio and Mississippi Railway and we will fix you up in Queen Anne style. Passengers for Dakota, Montana, or the Northwest will have an overcoat and sealskin cap thrown in with all tickets sold on or after the above date."

The great republic cannot yet take itself seriously. Let us hope the humors of it will

last another generation. Meditating on this, we hailed at sundown the spires of Abingdon, and regretted the end of a journey that seems to have been undertaken for no purpose.

MEXICAN NOTES.

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I. — FROM EL PASO TO THE CITY OF MEXICO.

NATURALLY one shrinks a little from writing about Mexico after passing less than two months in its vast territory. There is so much to be said, and there are so many qualifications to be made to whatever is said. The longer one remains there the more he will hesitate to put down even his impressions, and I fancy that in time one would abandon altogether any attempt to write out his conflicting ideas: so much depends upon the temper, the temperament, the tastes, the endurance, of the traveler. One person returns from a trip through Mexico in a glow of enthusiasm, interested in the people, enchanted with the climate, full of wonder over the scenery; another, weary with the long journeying, disgusted with the people, half starved by the unaccustomed diet, admits that the scenery is wonderful, though it is monotonous, and that the climate — except that the coast is too warm and the highland air is too rare — is delicious, and is heartily glad that the expedition has been made and is over.

To me Mexico is one of the most interesting countries I have seen, and so novel on every hand that I enjoyed in a way that which is disagreeable almost as much as that which is pleasing. It is novel, and yet, now and again, strangely familiar; for in its life it is a patch-work sort of country, with a degraded civilization, constantly suggesting, in a second-hand way, a half-dozen other countries and peoples. I spent most of my time outside the city of Mexico — for it is not there that the life, except a certain sort of artificial society life, is more advantageously to be studied — and in these papers I purpose to touch upon general life and manners and aspects of nature that came under my observation, with the intention of replying to some of the questions that a returning traveler is commonly asked about the pseudo-republic.[1]

Everything is on a vast scale. High ranges of bare mountains running parallel for hundreds of miles, with plains between, often stony and inhospitable, often good grazing land, verdure-clad under the summer rains, but brown and barren, except when irrigated, through the long rainless season from October to June — this is the general character of the highlands. Vastness is not picturesqueness, but those who pre-

[1] The journey was made in February and March, 1887.

fer the Sierra sort of scenery which characterizes our own Great West to that of the New England and the Blue Ridge like it. Descending from the mountains about the city of Mexico in any direction to the coast by a succession of terraces, one has scenery of a different sort, but still grandiose, and any warmth of temperature desired.

Entering the country by the gate of El Paso — a gate of ash-heaps for hills, and sand, through which the Rio Grande sprawls over quicksands — one has still twelve hundred miles to traverse — two days and a half by rail — before reaching the city of Mexico. The road runs mainly through valleys with low hills on either side; but it is by no means a highland level; the road is constantly ascending and descending. Starting from a height of 3700 feet above the sea at El Paso, and never descending below this level, some high mountains are climbed on the way. The course is generally upward until the mountain silver-mining city of Zacatecas comes in view, about 8000 feet above the sea. From here there is a sharp descent, but a high level is generally maintained till Marguez is reached, when the lost height is recovered in something over 8000 feet, and a descent made into the Tula Valley, the scenery and vegetation be-

coming more interesting. Then the great Spanish drainage cut (begun in the seventeenth century), six or seven miles long, the Tajo de Nochistongo, is entered, and the traveler emerges upon the valley of the city of Mexico, about 7400 feet (some calculations make it two hundred feet less) above the sea.

Sandy El Paso seldom has any rain, but its air, unaffected by the moisture of vegetation, is simply delicious, like that of the barren plains of western Texas. With five railways centring there, it is growing rapidly, and is full of speculators, traders, gamblers, and the usual accompaniments of frontier civilization. We changed money here, getting for $200 United States 249 Mexican silver dollars, as big and as valuable as our silver dollars; but the advantage of the change was not immediately apparent, for we paid at the stations one dollar for the same sort of meals we had paid seventy-five cents for in Texas. The Mexican Central road is smooth and good, except that the sand ballasting makes it occasionally dusty; but nothing whatever is to be said in favor of the fare at its stations. The first decently served meal found was that at Aguas Calientes, and that was Mexican. The line does not run through a single town — all lie a mile or a mile and a half to one side, and are reached

by horse-cars. Whether the people objected to having the railway near, or whether the company building it thought it more profitable to run street-cars to the towns, I do not know. Both reasons are given for the location.

The way at first was over a plain, rising, with brown serrated hills on both sides. For the first twenty-four hours the country was much in appearance like western Texas — dry and sterile at this season. Chihuahua, as we saw it, a mile and a half off, is a brown city with conspicuous cathedral towers. As we got further into the country the people idling at the railway stations began to be very picturesque and poverty-stricken. The hats made the most distinct impression. Everybody seems to invest his fortune in his hat. They are in great variety, but all are high-crowned, of felt or straw, with a brim six inches broad, sometimes the crown black and the brim white, always ornamented with silver or white braid, or a broad strap and buckle. The poor class is all in rags, cotton pantaloons, and a serape generally in strings, and irretrievably grimy. The towns on the road — brown clusters of sun-baked mud — the little adobe houses, the flat plain and pyramidal hills, reminded us of Egypt, as did the squalid people also. Nor was there wanting the peculiar minor cry or

singsong of boys keeping the cattle on the plains. Now and then was seen a woman with fine dark eyes and comely copper-colored features. Handsome boys in rags were common, and pretty babies. At the stations was always a crowd of spectators. The favorite occupation of the men, clad in big hat, cotton trousers, and ragged colored serape drawn about the shoulders, was to stand perfectly motionless, holding up some building. As we went south more life and more cattle appeared — herds on herds, indeed, scattered over the brown plains — and sheep also. Donkeys abounded. The rider of a donkey sits so far in the rear that a perpendicular line from his head would hit the ground, so that the donkey's hind-legs seem to belong to the boy riding. The country improved in appearance when we were between five hundred and six hundred miles on our journey — still brown and dry, but evidently fruitful. Trees were wanting, but mesquit appeared, and small species of cacti. There was a good deal of color in the soil, and some lovely effects in the plains and the mountains. We were beginning to get one of the charms of Mexico, namely, atmospheric color, which makes a garment for the fairest landscape — a drapery which the artists say is usually wanting in our Northern regions.

At a little station, very early in the morning, before we reached Calera, was a sort of gypsy, Oriental encampment — tents, wagons, donkeys, vagabond men, women, and a band composed of harp, fiddle, and bass-viol, which hailed the rising sun with festive music. These hospitable and hilarious people offered refreshments — coffee and something stronger — to the train passengers, and the women solicited them to go to a house near by and extemporize a dance. I supposed at first that this was a communal emigration from one part of the country to another. But no. These people lived along the base of the mountains, and had come together for a frolic of a few days, with cock-fighting and plenty of whiskey or its equivalent, aguardiente.

Zacatecas, with its 40,000 to 50,000 inhabitants, is an imposing city as seen from the rail which skirts it, and indeed looks down on it. The elevation is over 8000 feet, and the town lies in a sort of cup in the mountains, a compact lot of small houses, yellow, red, blue, green, and a great cathedral in the midst. On the hillsides all about and in the valley below it are the silver mines and works. The whole effect of color in the thin air is silver-gray. The wind is keen, and sweeps clouds of dust around the station, where there is a lively

crowd of fruit hucksters and spectators, in great variety of color and costume. At a station beyond, a Mexican lady of quality comes on board. She is of the Spanish type, overdressed in a flowered silk and black mantilla, rich dark complexion, through which the red blood shows, large black eyes, heavy cheeks, and coarse mouth. With her are an elderly woman in black, and several young men, gentlemen, in big hats, fantastically braided trousers, and semi-brigandish air.

Aguas Calientes, where we have at the station a civilized dinner, is in the distance a well-shaded, pretty city. It is the fashionable Mexican hot-springs resort, and the stream from the springs, in which there is promiscuous bathing for a mile, is said to give one a fair idea of the Mexican disregard for conventionalities. At the table d'hôte are several typical people: a light-haired Mexican, with high, narrow, empty forehead, very grave; the loud, swash-buckler major-domo of a neighboring hacienda, in an enormous white hat, fancy coat, and braided trousers, and a long pistol conspicuous in his belt; a big fat young gentleman with intensely black, small eyes, broad, heavy face, thin mustache, like a youth overripe, small forehead, and a big hat, talking to a little withered, parchment-faced man, attentive and obsequious.

Novel pictures constantly present themselves. The lady of quality descends at a way-station, where she is met by a handsome open carriage, with servants in livery, and a modern Spanish-looking gentleman, handsome, and not too extravagantly dressed in the Spanish mode. Her hacienda is not far off, at the foot of the hills. The lady is very well known in the city, and has a history. Mexico abounds in "histories." At all the stations are crowds of boys, men, and women, who offer for sale oranges, sweets, Mexican "messes," and queer-looking fruits which are out of season, and do not taste good, and they make a tremendous clamor, like Italian venders. The region beyond Silao boasts that it has ripe strawberries every month in the year. At Irapuato we bought a little basket of this fruit for fifty cents, not ripe, but still sweet. The basket was solidly filled with cabbage leaves; and disposed on top neatly, so as to hide the leaves, were a couple of dozen berries. These simple people have nothing to learn of Northern market-men. We have struck a very old civilization.

Tuesday morning at seven, having left El Paso Saturday night at seven, we passed through the famous deep cut or canal of Nochistongo. It is not picturesque, the walls being of hard earth, with little rock visible.

This cut was first made by the Indians as a drain for the valley. People have wondered what they did with the excavated earth; acquaintance with the Indians suggests the explanation that they kept most of it on their persons. They are no longer attached to the soil as peons, but the soil is attached to them, and most of them are dirty enough to be called real estate. We are at last in the valley of the city of Mexico. This long route, through valleys and over mountains, somewhat dusty, always in the sunshine, with a temperate heat and good air, is monotonous in all its variety, but exceedingly interesting in the retrospect, considering that it is a railway journey, for we have seen many sorts of people and many strange costumes.

The valley of the city of Mexico is circular in form, with an average breadth of thirty to thirty-five miles, and flat, save for some little hillocks. It has two shallow lakes, Chalco and Tezcoco, the one fresh and the other brackish. Chalco is connected directly with the city by a canal twelve miles long. The area is more generally marshy than otherwise, and cut by canals and irrigating ditches. To the north of the city some four miles is the hill and town of Guadalupe, with its sacred mineral spring; to the south three miles, at the end of the

Paseo drive, is the hill of Chapultepec. This basin is completely surrounded by mountains of varying height. To the west they rise 10,000 feet (above the sea), and east, southerly, are the twin snow peaks Iztaccihuatl and Popocatepetl, the latter 17,500 feet high, and the former, the White Woman, a little lower. All the streams from the hills run into this basin, and there is absolutely no outlet for the water except the cut of Nochistongo, which affects only a small portion of the valley. Exit from the city to the country is on slightly raised causeways. Thus Mexico, which, from its elevation and superb, equable climate, should be the healthiest city in the world, is, wanting drainage, subject to various malarial and typhoid fevers and to pneumonia. One hesitates to speak of the climate, for that is so much a matter of individual adaptation. To most people, I think, the climate of the valley is delicious. The rare air, the necessity of breathing fast to get oxygen enough, quickens the pulse, and many new-comers have headache and a pain in the back of the neck; but these usually pass off in a few days. It may not suit those who have tendency to heart-disease, and much better places can be found in the republic for those with irritated throats and delicate lungs. The average temperature,

summer and winter, is about 70°, running from 60° to 80° and over. The winter is rainless and dry from, say, October to the last of May; the trees and hedges are dusty, and the landscape brown; in summer the heat is no greater, but the air is cleared of dust and haze by daily showers, everything is green, blooming, and sparkling, and the atmosphere is said to be delicious. April and May are the warmest months of the year. With the summer rains, which turn to snow on the highest mountains, of course the two volcanoes have much more snow than in winter. Occasionally in January the thermometer falls below the average, the snow lies for some hours on the encircling foothills, and the city experiences some chilly, uncomfortable days, for which it is wholly unprepared. The mass of the people and the soldiers, who wear cotton clothes the year round, evidently do not expect this sort of thing. For a Northerner I should say the dress for summer and winter should be his ordinary woolen apparel for spring and autumn, with a light overcoat for driving.

No railways run into the city; the stations of all the roads are outside in the suburbs; but carriages are plenty and not dear, and street railways traverse the city in all directions, and run to the outlying villages. These cars always

go in pairs, a first-class closely followed by a second-class. For funerals, an open platform car performs the service of a hearse. It used to be necessary, when the country was unsafe, for cars going into the villages to make up a train of at least three, with a guard of soldiers.

The city, with some 300,000 inhabitants, spreads over a large area, with more houses of two than of three stories. The streets are of good width, laid at right angles, and often there is the agreeable perspective of a mountain at the end; the house architecture is generally simple, square, with square windows, balconies, awnings, and with considerable color in the houses, reddish, pink, cream, colors usually toned down, but which give life and even refinement to the streets. For variety there are some solid, stately, half-Spanish buildings, now and then one very handsome with tiles, some fantastically painted, and the picture-decorated pulque shops. In churches and public buildings the city does not lack imposing architecture, yet the general effect is that of sameness. There are many fine shops and pleasant arcades, especially in San Francisco Street, and about the Plaza; and of course there is more or less concentration of such in the centre of the city; but as a rule the city differs from our cities in not having a business quarter and a

residence quarter; like Paris, shops are scattered all over the city, and the people live over them. The monotony of the right-angled streets is broken by some picturesque market squares, by the large Cathedral Plaza, by the Alameda, a long narrow plot of ground with trees and semi-tropical vegetation, and the very broad and well-planted Paseo. This is lined with gardens and a few country houses, has some statues, and, running out three miles to Chapultepec, is the favorite driving and riding and display ground of all the world late in the afternoon. Of course it is understood that many of the edifices, hotels, public buildings and private, are built about courts, and that there are many pretty *patios* and gardens. In the shop windows is a good deal of cheap jewelry and a display of meretricious taste; but there are more book and art stores, more pictures and engravings, than can be found in any Southern city of the United States, and the art and fancy windows are usually thronged with spectators. The aspect of street life as to dress, in most parts of the town, is European, but it is motley as to color, most of the Mexicans being hybrids of all shades. Now and then appears an Indian woman, short and squat, with high cheek-bones, clad in a single piece of cotton cloth ingeniously wrapped about her.

The water-carriers, half naked, with the jar on the back supported by a strap across the forehead, remind one of the Orient; there are not many beggars, but the sidewalks are beset with women and children selling lottery tickets for daily drawings — the curse of the city; all the women, except in the upper class, wear invariably the graceful ribosa — a long shawl woven of cotton, with a deep fringe, generally light blue, worn over the head or draped about the shoulders. The serape, or blanket, the national garb for the men, appears less frequently in the city than in the country. Men are watering the streets with pails and garden watering-pots.

There are plenty of boarding-houses, built about courts, with interior galleries, most of the rooms opening only on the court, the fare being Mexican, and not bad when one is accustomed to it; several of the hotels are comfortable lodging-houses — pleasant if one gets a room with a window outside and a door upon the sunny court — and they have restaurants attached. But all these, and all those in the city, are decidedly of the third class, and not tempting to people with delicate appetites. There is no excuse for this poor cooking and indifferent service, for the markets were well supplied, and in private houses and clubs the

tables are excellent. A good hotel would be much appreciated by travelers. The custom of the country is to take morning coffee, breakfast at twelve, and dine at six or seven o'clock.

In itself, considering its mongrel population, climate, and easy-going mode of life, and compared with any city of the United States, Mexico is interesting; contrasted with Continental cities it is less so, and after its few "sights" are exhausted it becomes tiresome for the transient visitor — tiresome, that is, unless one devotes himself to the language, to a study of antiquities, or to social problems, such as that of the mixed race. All big cities are much alike after the surface novelties are worn off. There remains, of course, "society," somewhat secluded under the republic, and slightly enlivened by the foreign legations. There are many German and French merchants, and a few Englishmen doing business, but there are no American merchants. Generally speaking, the Americans, who have drifted in from the frontier as adventurers, or have fled here for personal reasons, have not been men who gave the Mexicans a favorable idea of American breeding, manners, or character. The railway service has carried there a different element. The Mexican himself thinks a great deal of manners and exterior courtesy, though his ideas of integrity are decidedly Oriental.

In its shops the city is more modern than the traveler expects to find it. Antiquity shops are few, and these have been pretty well ransacked by excursionists and dealers. Old Spanish lace and mantillas can only be had by chance, and old Spanish and Indian curios have been mostly picked up; yet treasures remain to the patient searcher in the way of old books, especially Spanish; and odd things illustrating the costumes and the industries of the country can be found occasionally. But as a rule the most characteristic things in the republic are to be sought in the provincial cities and the small villages. Lack of communication has preserved local peculiarities. Wherever the traveler goes, he will find some local flavor and some habits and costumes new to his experience. As to the "sights" of the city, they have been so fully written of that description in any detail would be out of place in a general view of this sort. The old tourist will probably most enjoy wandering about town and seeing how the Mexicans live; but there are a few sights that he must see in order to retain the respect of his home friends: these are the Cathedral, the Museum and Picture-Gallery, the National Library, Chapultepec, Guadalupe, the Noche Triste Tree, and the canal leading to Lake Chalco.

The Cathedral is perhaps imposing by its size, not otherwise — a jumble of bad Spanish architecture, and barren and uninteresting within, in comparison with Continental cathedrals. The Picture-Gallery, San Carlos, may have interest historically; artistically it has none. The walls are hung with old Spanish sacred rubbish, and the modern paintings are as bad, showing little new life or growth. There is not a painting that one would care to bring away for the cost of carriage. But the government has a school here, where pupils draw from casts and architectual designs. Much of the work of the pupils was creditable, and the school is full of promise. At the Museum of Mexican Antiquities the visitor will care to spend more time, though the country has been stripped of the relics of the old races by foreigners. There is a fair display of Aztec pottery, a little gold, a few ornaments, part of a dress worn by Montezuma; but the most interesting object in the part of the Museum that is arranged is the Aztec picture-writing. In a large lumber-room opening out of the court below, and usually kept locked, are the larger monuments of the old civilization. This room has an earth floor, and is in disorder. Carpenters are said to be at work in it, and the government has been for years putting it in

order, but it is in about the condition of the Sultan's museum of antiquities at Constantinople. Here is the Calendar Stone, with its enigmatical figures, and sacrificial stones, the uncouth images, the heavy recumbent figures, with head raised and knees drawn up, the conical stones, having serpents with feathers coiled about them. The impression made upon my mind by these objects was that of grotesqueness. Probably they are not meaningless, but they seem so. There is nothing in our civilization or tradition that brings us *en rapport* with them, or enables us to comprehend them. There is no beauty of form to appeal to us; nothing in the sculpture or designs that comes within the scope of our ideas; nothing intellectual. The inscriptions and characters give us no starting-point of sympathy. They seem to us not simply fantastic, but the work of people whose fancies were entirely out of the line of our own development. In this they differ wholly from the Egyptian remains, which are simpler, and, though we cannot understand them, appeal to something that we have in common with all antiquity. I am not referring to the comparative difficulty of reading the Egyptian hieroglyphics and the Mexican characters or ornamental designs, but to the essential difference in the appearance to our eyes;

the one is civilized, and the other barbarous. The National Library, housed in a sequestrated church, is a vast collection of Spanish and mainly ecclesiastical literature, wanting a catalogue and proper arrangement, but no doubt a good mousing-place for the student.

On the 17th of February, in the afternoon, when we drove out the broad Paseo to Chapultepec, the wind was fresh and chilly, the day was cloudy, and later there was a little rain. Indeed, about this time of year clouds begin to gather late in the day, the air becomes thick and hazy in the distance, so that the high mountains are obscured. This thickening of the atmosphere does not mean usually immediate rain, but daily the cloudiness increases until the daily summer rains begin. After they set in, the atmosphere for the greater part of the day is dazzlingly clear. For scenery, therefore, Mexico should be visited in the summer. The temperature is no higher than in the winter, on the high lands, but vegetation is fresh, and the air is clear. From the Paseo drive the twin snow-clad volcanoes Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl are visible; but, especially in the winter atmosphere, they seem distant, and do not dominate the city as one is led to expect from the pictorial representations.

Chapultepec is a mass of rock perhaps two

hundred feet high, springing abruptly from the plain, but behind it are low elevations gradually rising to the foot-hills. About the foot of this hill are semi-tropical gardens and the famous Cypress Grove. The roads winding through the noble avenues are the favorite resort for driving and riding. These trees, towering to a great height, magnificent in the stately upspringing of their trunks, and lovely in the deep cinnamon-color of the bark, are not to be compared to anything I have seen elsewhere. They are very old; one of them is called the Tree of Montezuma, and the grove was no doubt old when he reigned. I put the tape to one of them five feet above the ground, and got a girth of thirty-nine feet. I believe the Montezuma tree is larger.

The summit of the hill is reached by a winding carriage road, and here on a small uneven plateau are massed the President's palace and the Military School, the West Point of the republic. Admission is by card from the Governor of the city, and usually gives access simply to the grounds; but as one of our party had friends in the school, we were very courteously shown everything in the academy and the palace. The cadets were fine, intelligent young fellows; the place was thoroughly neat, and discipline seemed good. I do not know

enough about war to compare this with other schools of the same character, but its appliances seemed rather limited. There is, however, a cannon foundry in the neighborhood, and a manufactory of Winchester arms. We looked with interest at the monument erected to the memory of the cadets who fell in the defense of the place in our war with Mexico — mere striplings who fought like heroes, and are held in great honor. There is still a good deal of feeling about this fight in the academy. If the Mexican soldiers had been as courageous and manly as these boys, our capture of the city would have been a much more difficult undertaking. The palace, in process of refurnishing for the residence of the President, is a tolerably fine building only, but the interior decorations are elegant, very costly, and for the most part in exquisite taste. This taste, however, except in some rooms whose walls are tiled with beautiful tiles distinctly Persian in color and effect, is the taste of New York. The palace has charming galleries and ombras, and pretty cultivated gardens in its enclosure. The charm of it, however, is in its noble situation. There are grander views in the world than that from its esplanade, but few more poetical or offering so great variety, few that change more in varied beauty with the different lights

and changing atmosphere. One does not need to summon all the romance and history of the place to enjoy the prospect. It is that of the vast basin of Mexico, with its shining city, its glittering lakes, its silver canals, its luxury of vegetation, its villages and church towers, and around all the circuit of mountains, huge, hazy, and dreamy, the whole steeped in color, and lording it over all the twin snow peaks, white, spotless, standing on the edge of eternal summer, pure as the rare air of their perpetual winter.

On the tramway that runs to Atzcapotzalco over the causeway, in the little hamlet of Popotla, some three miles from the Plaza, stands what remains of the Noche Triste Tree. It is said that Cortez halted by this tree and wept on the awful night of his expulsion from the city. This touch of emotion in the conqueror has consecrated the spot more than a victory. This once gigantic cypress is now only a decayed stump, the interior half burned out, but it still supports a few straggling branches, from which gray moss depends like a funeral trapping. It is protected by an iron fence, and a policeman lounges near to see that no visitor chips off a relic from it. There was not much life about the open triangle where it stands, only a beggar, the usual young girl

with a baby, a barefooted Indian trotting by with her basket, and some Mexican women in the door of a pulque shop.

Guadalupe, famous for the shrine of Our Lady of that name, is a rocky hill, very like Chapultepec, and about as far north of the city as Chapultepec is to the south. They are two corresponding sentinels of the plain. At the foot of the hill is the cathedral, very large, but remarkable for nothing except a superb altar railing of silver. Near it is a pretty public garden, with a fountain and sweet-smelling shrubs, the ground carpeted with violets. It speaks much for the gentle and refined character of the Mexicans that such cool little nooks of beauty and repose are common. At a little distance, but still on the plain, is the highly decorated chapel of Our Lady. In the vestibule and covered by an iron cage is a bubbling spring of cool mineral water, pungent, but agreeable to the taste, and much resorted to by the thirsty and the devout. It sprang up in the spot where Our Lady appeared to the peasant, a most gracious miracle. From this chapel a zigzag paved road, with shrines set at the angles, leads up the hill to the church and cemetery on the top. The church — always filled with peasant worshipers, men in ragged attire, kneeling women with the graceful ribosa drawn

over the head, and half-clad children — is only a bare chapel, but there are some fine tombs in the cemetery, and there lies Santa Anna, the hero of so many defeats. The view from the esplanade is very fine, and of the same character and extent as that from Chapultepec, except that Lake Tezcoco is a more prominent feature in the landscape. It is a place to dream in; romance, history, beauty, the contrasts of nature — what has not Heaven done for this delicious land? Is it true that where nature is most lavish the people are least worthy? But whatever these people lack, they have apparent contentment. What a gentle atmosphere of peace and repose there was about the shrine, and in the garden, and in the shadow of the cathedral, where the women sat selling little cakes, variegated in color, about as big as Lima beans, which they patted into shape, and baked over charcoal fires in sight of the purchasers.

Whatever the tourist omits, he should not neglect a ride on La Viga, the canal that connects the city with Lake Chalco. If he cannot spend a day threading this tropical marsh-land, this unique country of dikes, "floating gardens," water-fowl, brilliant vegetation, and semi-amphibious people, let him at least go as far as the hamlet of Santa Anita, in the midst of the *Chinampas* — a pleasure resort of

the middle and lower classes. Here are a world and a life different from any other, and yet curiously suggestive of many others; a mixture of Egypt, Venice, and the South Sea Islands. We took boat at the Embarcadero, on an arm of the canal that enters the city, a most unsavory but picturesque place. Here are rows of barges, vegetable boats, and canoes. Our boat was a flat-bottomed parallelogram, with striped calico awning and curtains, and seats along the sides. The size of the boat and the lowness of the canopy are determined by the low arch of a bridge which has to be passed by all boats in the main canal. Our boatman was a squat, sturdy-legged, yellow Mexican, who stood in the bow, and used a pole to propel the boat. When once we were clear of the small canal, with its washer-women, loafers, evil-smelling habitations, tanneries, and the ruck of city life, and came into the broad silver stream, the poling boatman sent us on with an easy, lulling motion, different from the gyration of the gondola, but as fascinating; and we were in a world of novelty, color, and repose — a blue sky, a gentle breeze that just makes sparkling the placid stream, and banks offering constant novelties.

In the neglect and decay there is a certain charm; low houses overrun with honeysuckle

and Castilian roses, ruins embowered in callas, poplars and cottonwoods overhanging the water, gardens wild and tangled, a low doorway in a brown adobe hut, with a group of dark-skinned girls and children, a field of yellow grain strewn with flaming poppies, the great sweep of level vegetation, intersected by ditches and canals stretching away off to the white twin mountains. The scene, so reposeful, is full of life. A road runs by the canal, and here dash along horsemen in gay trappings, big-hatted, silver-spangled riders, and saddles and bridles stiff with ornament, carriages with lolling beauties, or packed with noisy pleasure-seekers, swarthy Indian women, wrapped in a single strip of cotton, trotting along under their burdens; there are the tinkling of guitars in way-side resorts, the calls of boatmen and of laborers in the gardens. The stream is enlivened by crafts of all sorts — dugouts, canoes, barges, each on its errand of business or pleasure. Whatever the occupation, whatever the want, or the dissipation, or the indigence, it all seems like a holiday. Barges going to the city market are piled high with vegetables — golden carrots, blood-red beets, green cabbages, laid up in square masses like masonry; heaps of color; boat-loads of flowers — sweet-peas, poppies, pinks, roses, gillyflowers, flaming in the sun,

and filling the air with perfume as they pass, and long scows packed with men, women, and children of the shopkeeping class out for a holiday. One boat-load of revelers draws to our side, and as we float along through this enchanting land, the men, thrumming the guitar, the mandolin, and the zither, play for us the Mexican national anthem, and the minor dance music which comes down from the Moors of Spain, and the women, dark, comely, with Egyptian features and Egyptian languor, shoot glances from under their ribosas at the foreigners. These people have the good-humor, the complacency, the passion, of their clime.

Santa Anita is an Indian village, a collection of low thatched houses, African in appearance, set in plantations of bananas and cacti, with narrow, clean-swept streets, pulque shops, and houses of entertainment for the lower orders. It is a shabby sort of paradise; the city rough is here, the dissolute players on mandolins, the bedizened young Mexican, the shapely, bronze-limbed Indian who works in the fields or poles the boats through the net-work of canals, the painted city yellow-girl, the broad-faced Indian girl who sells flowers cut out of beets and carrots, and the hot little messes which the Mexicans love; and here the municipal police are more numerous than elsewhere, for here is

always a more or less suspicious lot of idlers and pleasure-seekers, come to eat stewed duck, tamales, and the piquant compounds of chile and chopped meat, and above all to drink pulque. The *Chinampas*, or so-called floating gardens, which surround this hamlet and occupy all this vast marsh territory, and which supply the city with vegetables and flowers, are not at all floating. They are little patches of ground, sometimes not bigger than a blanket, formed by scraping up the earth in a mound, which is held in place by wattles. The water flows around each patch of ground, so that the whole region is a net-work of ditches and canals, set with little squares of vegetables and flowers. The people who cultivate these damp spots live in their boats or in the most primitive huts, and pass, as we said, a semi-amphibious existence, on a moral plane as low as their country; yet they seem to be a vigorous race, and the sculptor would find many good models here. Flowers, music, an equable climate that calls for no more exertion in winter than in summer, and demands not much in the way of food or clothing, a mixed blood in which flow the vices of two continents — it is not here that one expects the virile Puritan virtues that make an effective people. But so fascinating, so picturesque, so full of light and color and warmth,

is this region of Capuan suggestions that it is not till afterward that the tourist indulges in such reflections.

In returning we followed the small canal down into the heart of the city, to one of the great popular market-places. Here, where lie the barges with their gay loads of fruits, flowers, and vegetables, where the canal crosses the streets under low, flat arches, one is faintly reminded of the Rialto. But it is one of the lowest parts of the city, and at night might be dangerous. It swarms with ill-favored, ill-savored people, a brutal populace, streets of second-hand shops, rags, low resorts, and pulque shops, with as many drunken women as drunken men.

One can study in the city, as in any large city, all sorts of life, but the ordinary tourist finds it wanting in the attractions of Continental cities. But the city is not only the capital, it is the centre of all the political life of the republic. For in all outward forms this is a federal republic. The city and its environs form the federal district, in the State of Mexico. Besides this state there are twenty-six other states, each with its governor and local legislature, its system of schools. The federal constitution is a model one, there is all the machinery of a republican government, two elected Houses,

a President popularly chosen for a term of six years, who is ineligible again until a term has intervened. But the President is in fact elected by agreement among a knot of leaders, and the office is a matter of arrangement, bargained for usually a long time in the future. Every governor of a state is practically dictated by this little junta at the capital, and every officer, even to mayors of cities, is so chosen. It is the most purely personal government in the world. Whatever elective forms are gone through with, this is the fact. When the first term of Diaz expired, Gonzales came in by arrangement; when the latter retired, it was to a governorship. Diaz has a predominance of Indian blood, Gonzales of Spanish.

In his first term Diaz took an enlightened view of the needs of Mexico and its external relations. He invited capital and promoted railways by liberal subsidies. The railways were built; the subsidies have not been paid. The country was infested with brigands. These brigands were not Indians, but of the mixed Spanish race who had possessions, and took to the highways only on occasion, or when the country was politically disturbed. Vigorous efforts were made to suppress this by the government. Gonzales had the reputation of being the head of these quasi-brigands. When

he came into power brigandage was still more effectively suppressed. People say that his method was to put all the brigands in office, make them governors, mayors, and high district officials, where they could make more than by intercepting caravans, stopping diligences, and carrying off owners of haciendas. And it is universally believed in Mexico that Gonzales in his term of four years saved out of his salary between twelve and eighteen millions of dollars, which is now well invested. These leaders are astute diplomatists, as wary and as supple and subtle as the Turks. Whoever makes a treaty with them is likely to be confused by the result; whoever invests money in Mexico, either in public works or in private enterprise, does so at his risk. Any basis of confidence is wanting in business. The Mexicans do not trust each other. They always seem surprised when a foreigner does as he said he would do. The moral condition is something like that of Egypt. The atmosphere of Egypt is one of universal lying. We who are accustomed to do business on universal faith — the presumption being that a man is honest until the contrary is proved — cannot understand a social state where the contrary is the assumption.

One can readily grant to Diaz patriotic intentions, and the desire to have Mexico take an

honorable place in the world; but justice is not had priceless in the courts, the officials are all serving their own interests, and official corruption is universal. And yet travel is now safe, public order is maintained, and there is marked progress in education. Still, whatever the government is, there is no public, no public opinion, no general comprehension of political action, no really representative government, or representative election. There are few newspapers, the people are not informed, and the mass of them are indifferent, so long as they are personally not disturbed. In only one case (the action of the Congress in regard to the English debt — action promoted by a determined demonstration of the students in the city) has there been any sign of the independence of the legislature. Mexico remains, in effect, a personal government with no political public. I am making no sweeping declaration as to the character of the mongrel population; it has its good points. These will appear as we travel further.

II. — CUAUTLA.

CUAUTLA is a typical Mexican village in the temperate region, about 4000 feet above the sea, in the State of Morelos, which adjoins the State of Mexico on the south. It is reached by a railway — eighty miles in seven hours — which climbs out of the valley eastward, and then runs south and west, making an almost exact half-circle to its destination. In Mexico the railways must run where the mountains permit.

The first part of the way lies over the flat plain, through the *chinampas*, or little patches of truck gardens, over narrow canals and ditches, through overflowed ground with tufts of marsh-grass, and between the two lakes. The whole region is alive with teal ducks, which rise from the lagoon and whirl away in flocks as the train passes. On the slightly elevated roads donkeys laden with vegetables (the patient beast which a witty woman calls "the short and simple animal of the poor"), Indian women, also bent to their burdens, short, with flat faces, brown legs, small feet,

and small hands — the aristocracy of the soil — and Mexican laborers in ragged serapes and broad straw hats, file along toward the city. Soon abrupt elevations in the plain are reached, picturesque heights with churches, and the foot-hills are entered. The journey grows more interesting as we ascend, the adobe villages have a more foreign character, and the mixed population becomes more picturesque in costume and habits. The train is made up of first, second, and third-class cars. The Mexican men in the first-class, yellow half-breeds, are gorgeous in array, wearing enormous and heavy high-crowned, broad-brimmed hats, loaded with silver and gold bullion, trousers braided down the seams or thick sewn with coins or buttons of silver, every man with a pistol ostentatiously strapped on his waist, and many of them carrying guns. These gentlemen are going to hunt at some hacienda in the hills, and at the stations where they alight there is great scurrying about, getting into rickety carriages, mounting heavily caparisoned little horses, which fidget and curvet. There is an amusing air of bravado about it all.

The third-class cars have four parallel benches running from end to end, and are packed with a motley throng — Indian-looking Mexican women in blue ribosas, plenty of chil-

dren and babies, men in soiled serapes and big hats, everybody eating some odd mess. At all the stations the train makes a long halt, and the sides of the cars swarm with hucksters, mostly women and boys, offering the zapotas and other tasteless fruits, *tamales* and other indescribable edibles, ices (flavored and colored snow), pink drinks faintly savored with limes, and pulque. The *tamal* is a favorite composite all over the republic. It consists of chopped meat, tomatoes, and chile rolled in a tortilla. The tortilla, perhaps it is necessary to say, the almost universal country substitute for bread, is a cake made of maize, and about the size of a large buckwheat cake. Its manufacture is one of the chief occupations of the women. In almost every hut and garden one can hear the grinding and the patting of the tortilla. Seated on the ground, the woman has beside her a dish of soaking grains of maize. In front of her is a curved stone, and upon this she mashes the maize with a stone roller held in both hands until it is a paste. This paste she moulds and skillfully pats into shape, and lays upon a piece of sheet-iron to bake over a charcoal fire. Too often it is like Ephraim — "a cake not turned."

Beggars abound, hideously malshapen and afflicted. At one station a sightless giant

(who could, however, see a train of cars and pick up a piece of money), six feet four inches in his bare feet, a mass of streaming hair and tattered clothes, roared aloud for charity. Kneeling on the ground opposite the cars, so that his face was about on a level with the windows, he delivered a long oration in sonorous Spanish. When a bit of money was thrown him he picked it up and kissed it fervently, and called down all the blessings of Heaven on the giver. When he got nothing he cursed the entire train in a blast of anti-Scriptural language enough to blow it off the track. He does very well at this business, and is the owner of houses, and is a comfortable citizen when not excited by a railway train. The population, on the whole, looks poor and degraded; but the women, though squat in figure and aboriginal in feature, the Indian type predominating over the Spanish, have pleasant faces, and wear an aspect of patience.

At and before we reached Amecameca, an elevation of over 8000 feet, the twin snow mountains rose in view, and thereafter lorded it over the landscape in all our winding way. From Amecameca the ascent of Popocatepetl is usually made, and the cone shows very grandly across the ravine from its elevation. This is the village of sacred shrines and noble

groves, much resorted to by pilgrims and excursionists. At the sacred festival in May as many as 40,000 worshipers assemble here. At Ozumba, where the road begins to descend, we breakfasted very well for fifty cents, in a rude shanty, on eggs, rice, beefsteak, three or four other kinds of meat and stews, sweets, pulque, and black coffee. The pulque is best in these high regions. It is a viscous milk-white fluid, very wholesome and sustaining, and would be a most agreeable drink if it "tasted good." In fact it tastes, when it has been a few days fermented, like a mixture of buttermilk and sour cider. But many strangers become very fond of it. The older it grows the more intoxicating it is. As the reader knows, probably, it is drawn from the maguey plant, called by us the "century," which grows on these elevations to a great size, and is the cleanest-limbed and most vigorous and wholesome-looking product of the region. When it matures it shoots up a stout spike ten or twenty feet high from the centre, bearing brilliant orange flowers. When the plant is ready to tap, the centre stalk is cut out, and the sap collects in the cup thus formed. It is dipped out, or sucked out by a tube, and when first drawn is mild, cool, and refreshing. In about three days it begins to ferment. As it is often car-

ried to market on the backs of natives in pig or goat skins, it gets a disagreeable flavor. The maguey plant has many uses. It is eaten cut up and preserved like melon rinds. Its long tough fibre is very extensively used in making ropes and cordage. The end of each leaf terminates in a hard, sharp, black thorn. Break off this thorn and strip down the fibres attached to it, and you have a capital needle and thread for coarse sewing. The muleteers use it to mend their saddles and broken harness straps. What encouragement is there to industry when nature furnishes in one plant drink, food, needles and thread, and a rope for lariats?

From Ozumba the descent was rapid, in most extraordinary loops and curves, the long train, which was nearly all freight cars, so doubling on itself that the passengers in the rear car could almost shake hands with the engineer on the curves. The air on the summit had been cool, but it grew rapidly warm as we descended to Cuautla. Olive groves were seen on the slopes, and peach-trees were in bloom in the little mud villages. The descent was exciting in its rapidity, and the ever-changing view — a vast panorama of mountains and valleys — kept us on the *qui vive*. In our windings the twin volcanoes were always in sight, first on one side and then on the other, Popo-

catepetl, almost a regular cone of snow, 17,500 feet in the azure sky, and Iztaccihuatl, a little lower, but longer, with a jagged, serrated summit, and buttressed by gigantic ledges. Nothing is finer than the majesty of these mountains, so rich in color, so changing in hue at different angles of vision, so nobly dominating the vast slopes down which we were rushing. The country was brown in this dry season, but the soil looked fertile, ready to burst into bloom with the summer rains. As we wound down into the valley, shabby brown villages, both Mexican and Indian, were passed, each with its big cathedral, some of the churches almost in ruins and deserted, remnants of the old Spanish religious enthusiasm. In some of these Indian villages quite primitive customs prevail still, and the inhabitants are as shy of foreigners as they were before the conquest. The plain of Cuautla is watered by a cool mountain stream, and abundantly irrigated; trees dot the valley, and we had the welcome sight of green fields. Just before reaching the town we ran through vast plantations of cane in all stages of growth.

Cuautla, which is too hot and damp in the summer, has a singularly agreeable winter climate, with a warm, direct sun, but a very genial atmosphere. The railway has a picturesque station and storehouse in an abandoned

church. We passed from that across a tree-planted square to the Hotel San Diego. This is a house of one story, with interior colonnades, built about a large court or garden. All the rooms, which have brick or stone floors, and are furnished only with movable cots, a chair, a small washstand, a bit of mirror (when the irresponsible maid-of-all-work does not carry it away to some other apartment), and perhaps a mat by the cot-side, open on the court, and most of them have no other opening for light and air except the door. A few on the street have windows and wooden shutters. The fare is not quite as primitive as the apartments, for the French landlord introduces some variety into the Mexican cuisine. The garden, although the kitchen is on one side of it, and it is not altogether tidy, is a sunny, lovely spot, with a fountain, flowers, bananas, a date-palm, zapotas, jinnies, and other fruit and flowering plants, and Popocatepetl is seen over its trees.

It is difficult to give an idea of a village so foreign to general experience, Oriental in so many of its aspects, and semi-tropical in its vegetation. Its main streets are regular, continuous blocks of one-story adobe houses and shops — the latter like those in an Italian village — and present mainly blank walls to the passer-by, through the doors of which one

looks into a court or a garden. There is a formal plaza, with the municipal buildings and shops on three sides, and the principal church on the other, none of them remarkable; but the plaza has fountains, sweet shrubs, trees, and flowers, and a band-stand. The minor streets are simply monotonous rows of adobe walls, some are narrow and roughly paved, but half the town consists of lanes, dusty and unpaved, bordered with gardens and huts, and overhung with the foliage of fruit trees and with vines. It is all novel, however; the odd little shops — bakers', butchers', barbers', jewelers', all on a small scale and primitive — and the queer costumes, bits of colors in the walls, groups of yellow children, a dog riding a donkey, pretty girls in the doorways, women in ribosas, men in white, always with the enormous hats: some strange sight continually catches the eye. In one of the churchyards are the handsome trees whose flowers are bunches of long crimson tassels, and in another are the parotas, splendid growths, one of them overrun with a gigantic vine, the *copa de oro*, which hung out all over it its great yellow flowers, literal cups of gold. In the large church a few people were kneeling on the floor, women mostly; the interior was cheap and shabby, and gaudily painted in staring colors.

The reason that the shops are so small and of little consequence is that almost all the buying and selling is done in open market on the regular market-day. To this the dealers take their merchandise, and the country people bring their produce. In Cuautla Sunday is the chief market day, and to the market we went after morning coffee. It was a large open space, dusty, with booths about the sides, and a couple of roofed platforms in the middle. Here were for sale meats, vegetables, fruits, mats, hats, sugar, cloth, every sort of merchandise, mostly spread upon the ground, Oriental fashion. But for the absence of camels and turbans and dervishes one might have fancied himself in a North African market-place. It was thronged. The women in cotton gowns of sober colors, now and then one of faint pink; all wore the ribosa, and all had broad faces and Indian features. But the real Indian women were easily distinguished; shorter, with heavy masses of coarse black hair, and rather copper than yellow in color, they uniformly wore two strips of dark blue cloth, which were wrapped about them so as to reveal part of the bosom and leave the sturdy brown legs bare. The men wore white shirts, pleated and starched before and behind, and worn outside the white cotton trousers, and of course the

broad hat, usually of straw. These people, except the Indians, who come in from their little villages with a handful of vegetables or some tortillas to sell, are hybrids of various shades, with much of the Spanish courtesy and civility, but indolent in manner, and apparently perfectly satisfied in their ignorance and poverty.

As good a specimen of a semi-tropical garden as one will see anywhere is that of Cortina Mendoza. It is an extensive fruit plantation, and is rather an orchard than a garden, though it resembles neither in our experience. It is a thicket of luxuriant and sweet-smelling and spicy vegetation, and one strays in its dark and damp *allées* in a tropical gloom, into which the sun penetrates in rifts and gleams. Water diverted from the river rushes through it in swift streams — pure water, the ever-pleasant moisture of which fills all the garden — and small conduits from the canals keep the whole surface water-soaked, except the elevated paths. Here grow in a wild tangle bananas and plantains, thickly set along the streams as rushes by a meadow brook; the mango, the mamey, and papaya — all large trees; the orange, lemon, and the lime, and the coffee-plant. It is a wilderness of strange foliage, swinging vines, penetrating odors, and brilliant colors.

Amid the dark leaves gleam the white blossoms of orange and lemon and their golden globes of fruit, the yellowing mangos, and the red coffee-berries. Coming into this place of deep shade, dampness, and coolness, out of the hot and dusty street, this fenced section of green foliage and bright fruit, one appreciates the passion the Orientals have for running water and shade. But it is all unkempt and untidy, and to the eye accustomed to neatness and orderly cultivation, this wild plantation is typical of the character of this civilization.

It is the slack time of the year (February) for fruits in this region, and the few, like the chico papaya, that are ripening are flat and tasteless — indeed the majority of tropical fruits are always insipid to our palates. But it is the time of the maturing of the coffee-berry. This plant requires abundant water and heat and shade. When not planted by waterways in such a fruit forest as this, it is set out in banana thickets, whose broad leaves protect it from the direct rays of the sun. The plant is a hardy shrub, with a stem from two to three inches in diameter, and growing ten or twelve feet high — a very respectable tree. From some of the young saplings I cut good walking-sticks. The berries grow on the slender branches, which droop under the weight like

the willow: if you lift one, it is as heavy as if it were strung with beads of glass. When ripe the berry is deep red in color, oval in form, and in size varying from that of a thorn-apple to a hazel-nut. Inside the skin is a soft sweetish pulp, and this embeds the two beans, which lie with the flat faces touching, and each further protected by a thin membrane. When the majority of the berries are red they are stripped from the branches and spread upon mats to dry, and sometimes upon the ground. Dried, the berries shrivel and become black, and they are then passed through a machine to separate the pulp from the berries. The beans, after further drying, are pounded in a wooden mortar to free them from the thin membrane. The bean, which is then of a faint green color, is ready for market; but it needs age before it is fit to be ground for coffee, and the older it is the better; in two years' time it gets a good flavor. In this way of harvesting and curing of course the unripe and imperfect berries are included with the good, and the product is inferior. While drying, if the berry gets wet from the dew or a chance shower, its flavor is impaired; and when it is spread on earth floors to dry, I fancy it gets an earthy taste. The Mexican coffee, which with proper care is as delicious as any in the world, not excelled for

richness and fineness of flavor by the Arabian, is as a rule rudely prepared. It will come into great popularity under more scientific handling. The product, which is large, is nearly all consumed at home, for the Mexicans are great coffee-drinkers; but with its soil and climate there is no reason why Mexico cannot grow coffee for all the Western world.

There is a great mystery about the varieties and grades of coffee — Java, old Java, Mocha, Rio, etc. It is my opinion, from what I saw of the growth and preparation in Mexico, that the same plant produces in appearance all these varieties — though I do not mean to say that there is not a difference in flavor in the coffee-bean grown in Brazil, Mexico, the Sandwich Islands, and Arabia. A considerable proportion of the Mexican coffee is grown from the Arabian or Mocha bean. The Mocha, as we know it in Europe or in this country, is a small round berry, not flattened on one side, but creased. Each berry contains only one bean. Now all the coffee-plants that I saw in Mexico bear berries with one bean and with two beans; on very old plants there are more single-bean berries than on the young plants, and single-bean berries grow on the ends of the branches. There is a famous variety of coffee in Mexico called the Colima, said to be from the Mocha berry.

I have no doubt that it is. But coffee resembling the Colima bean in appearance and flavor is produced elsewhere in Mexico, and is merely a matter of selection. I saw it at Uruapan in the west, and at Coatepec on the east coast. Pick out from the beans of any field all the small round ones, and you have Mocha; then select the fair, well-grown, flat beans, and you have a good quality of Java; the refuse, broken and imperfectly ripened beans, you can send to market under any name you please.

I suppose that the low repute the Mexican coffee of commerce has had is owing to the fact that it has been thrown into the market green and without selection. Its cultivation and handling are usually very primitive. Ripe and unripe berries are stripped from the stalk; in drying on mats or the ground it is likely to acquire foreign flavors, and no care is taken to reject the imperfect beans. Careful growers, foreigners, are beginning to use more scientific processes. They will pick or buy none but the red, perfectly ripe, berries. These are immediately put through the machines for removing the pulp. The beans are then dried on frames in ovens with low artificial heat, and the grains are carefully picked over before they are sacked. The natives say that the coffee gains a desirable flavor by being dried in the sweet pulp. All

the Mexican coffee, of sufficient age, that I tasted, has a delicious flavor, but it is often spoiled in its preparation for the table. It is commonly burned too much. Ground to a fine powder, and placed in a vessel with a fine sieve bottom, water is poured on, and the fluid drips through slowly, drop by drop, requiring hours to collect a small cup of liquor. This is very strong, and black as ink. It is the very essence or extract of coffee, and a table-spoonful of it is enough when added to hot milk to make a large cup of coffee. The traveler will do well to procure a bottle of this extract in order to strengthen his hotel coffee.

We spent a week at Cuautla, and might have stayed there months, as many tourists and invalids do, and not have tired of its easy-going, picturesque life. We wander along one of the dusty lanes, vine-embowered, mount some uneven stone steps, and through a door in the wall enter, not a house, but a garden. Yet it is a house, and we are in the midst of domestic life. There is a pool of water, perhaps a running stream; large fruit trees cast a dense shade; splendid oleanders are in flower; the coffee-berries are ripening red; the great plantain leaves, whipped to strings by the wind, rustle in the breeze. Children, half naked, are playing about, racing after the donkey or chas-

ing each other in the leafy *allées*. Sombre-looking men lounge about the huts in a perpetual siesta. Some of the huts are of adobe, open in front, with an earth floor. By the entrance, sitting on the ground, a woman is grinding corn on a stone and baking tortillas. Always one hears in all these houses and gardens, at all hours of the day, the soft pat-patting of the tortilla cakes. Very likely the hut is of cane, a mere shelter from the sun and dew, and several of them grouped together make the different rooms of the house; or it may be a more pretentious dwelling, round in form, the walls of cane, and the conical roof heavily thatched with brown grass. Perhaps there is a palm-tree near, and, with the bananas, the picture is exactly that of a Central African hut with its surroundings. The whole family, all its branches, with swarms of children, live in this garden, eating its fruits, sucking cane stalks, and procuring, I know not how, the one indispensable thing — maize to make the tortillas. In this fashion live a considerable proportion of the population of Mexico. How long will it be before they will care anything for politics or literature, and feel the restlessness of modern life? Very Oriental all this — the thatched, conical huts, the luxuriant vegetation, the dark, lazy people.

Cuautla has some reputation for its sulphur baths, to which rheumatic and other invalids resort occasionally. We drove one morning in the only vehicle the place possesses — a rumbling, rickety carriage — out across the river bridge, and over a broken country, mostly a brown barren waste of land, with dried-up aromatic shrubs and coarse herbage, a mile and a half to the baths. Beyond the bridge is a collection of huts and a shanty of entertainment, to which the lower orders resort for dancing and reveling. In a little rocky valley flows a strongly alkaline, clear stream, smelling of sulphur, and where it falls into a couple of basins in the rock the bathers were assembled. The pools are of greenish hue, and clear as crystal. The bathing is delicious, but the arrangements for it are very primitive. The pools were occupied by men, women, and children, and others were undressing and dressing on the margin. Shelter there was none, except an angle in the rocky wall, and a couple of little cane huts. After waiting a long time until the women and children were withdrawn, I secured the angle in the rock, and succeeded in getting a dip in the crystal brook; but none too soon, for fresh company continually arrived. I mention this because it is a custom of the country, and the Mexicans do not mind this promiscuous bath-

ing, though I believe they are as modest in fact as many of the bathers along our Atlantic coast. Strolling down the stream after the bath, I made the acquaintance of a Mexican family out for a holiday. They had bathed, and were now building a fire under a spreading sycamore to cook their mid-day meal, and enjoy an afternoon siesta. There was the vigorous mother, three or four young girls, prettier than Mexican young women usually are, and half a dozen small children. The whole party were full of merriment and good-nature, did not seem to regard the presence of a stranger as an intrusion, pressed upon me the hospitality of their unappetizing-looking "messes," and were friendly and cordial and simple, and as little self-conscious as if I had been a native. The country all about was a broken dry plain, with strange, fantastic flowering plants, a few cacti, and no grass. But the air was delicious, and the sky blue and cloudless.

The Cuautla Valley is a vast sugar plantation, most of it the property of one man, Cortina Mendoza, a wealthy Mexican, reputed to be worth six millions of dollars, and the builder and chief owner of the Morelos Railway. His large hacienda and sugar factory are a few miles down the valley, and we reached them by a branch railway running through the cane

fields. The whole region is perfectly irrigated. Cane matures in this country and blossoms as it never does in the short Louisiana season. We passed fields in all stages of growth — wet ground just set with new sprouts, stubble fields springing up anew, fields with green blades like young maize, fields nearly matured, with the red, sturdy stalks, and fields where the cutters were at work. The richness of the cane is judged not only by the size of the stalks, but by the length of the joints. The mature cane here was exceedingly rich in sugar.

The hacienda is a vast establishment, a pile of buildings — dwelling-house, factory, sheds, stables, all together, the whole inclosed by a high wall, with cannon mounted at intervals. When the country was disturbed, this defensive preparation was needed by all the haciendas, which had to guard against attacks by brigands and chance plunderers. This is said to be the largest sugar hacienda in Mexico. I do not know the number of acres of cane under cultivation; it is about 2000; but the owner employs 600 men in the mill, and 2500 altogether on his vast estate. He has imported and set up improved machinery to the value, it is said, of half a million dollars. The cane is maturing all the time, winter as well as summer, and the grinding goes on every day in the year. The

sugar, which has one of the requisites of good sugar, great sweetness, is brown in color, and cast into conical loaves of twenty-five pounds each, the reported net profit to the owner on each loaf being one dollar. The Mexicans consume a great deal of sugar, probably nearly all they produce; and they say that they prefer the dark because it is sweeter than the white and the refined, and purer.

Within the walls the scene was a very animated one. The area was strewn with crushed cane stalks. Carts loaded with fresh cane, carts loaded with the crushed stalks, were constantly arriving and departing; half naked men, their dark bodies shining with perspiration, dragged the cane from the carts, bound it for the swinging derricks that carried it to the crushers, or piled the vehicles with the refuse. Everybody was in a hurry; the boys lashed the mules and shouted, and the incessant whirring of the mill machinery seemed to communicate its energy to the whole plantation. The crusher was always revolving; the stream of sweet sap was always pouring from its wheels into the channel to the boiling vats; the boilers were always steaming; in sticky, molasses-saturated rooms the centrifugals were always whirling; in long chambers men passed to and fro bearing the melted sugar and pouring it into

the moulds; in great drying-rooms stood rows on rows of sugar-loaves; and in the shipping-house all was bustle and activity. We groped about in the half-dark caverns and recesses of this vast establishment, slipping on the sticky floors, sprinkled by the centrifugals, up stairs and down, until we were stunned by the noise and saturated with sweetness. Floors, walls, machinery, the ground — everything was plastered with sugar. I thought that if the premises were "cleaned up," as gold-mills are, sugar enough would be "tried out" to supply Cuautla for a year.

The centre of all this life and whirl was one man; his presence it was that made the mule carts race through the fields, the men shout and hurry in the yards, the wheels grind, the vats run, and the sugar take form. In a high, broad, dirty, recessed gallery, above the yard, and attached to the main factory, sits Cortina Mendoza, a giant of a man, long past the age of sixty, in a light summer suit, his ample forehead shaded by a broad straw hat, black keen eyes glowing through his spectacles. Before him is a plain deal table, with an inkstand and a few papers. About him are dogs, servants, children, messengers coming and going, swarms of dark-skinned, half-clad heathen, amid the whir of the machinery and the braying of

donkeys. This is his office. From this platform he overlooks the whole moving panorama. Here he sits, hour after hour, day after day, a man taciturn, morose in appearance, dispatching all business with a few curt words. He stops a minute in his work to greet us civilly, details an attendant to show us the mill, and asks afterward what he can do for us; even rises when we depart, and regrets that he has not more time for hospitality. There he sits, reading and answering his correspondence, receiving hourly reports from every part of his plantation, from each section of his works. He knows every hour just how much cane is brought in, what rate of sugar it is yielding, exactly the day's product, how many pounds have been made, how much shipped. The premises swarm with flies; attracted by the sweets, they pervade the place, settling in black masses or darkening the air. It is an Egyptian plague. They literally cover the stalwart proprietor as he sits at his deal table.

Cortina Mendoza is a widower. Years ago he lost his lovely and beloved wife, and the story is, he has since that bereavement devoted himself exclusively with a grim determination to his sugar hacienda. I was told that he is actually alone in the world. Of society certainly he can have little in that mongrel crew

among whom his life is passed. He is very rich, as I said; he has a fine house luxuriously furnished in Mexico. Seldom if ever does he visit it, seldom does he seek other society than that of his laborers and dependents. It is a hot place, that recess, hot even in February. But there sits, day after day, year in and year out, surrounded by swarms of steaming, half-naked servants, donkeys, and dogs, one of the richest men in Mexico, covered with flies!

The capacity of this country for sugar-growing seems to me enormous. How can it be otherwise in regions where the soil is fertile, as it is in all the valleys, upland or lowland, where water is abundant for irrigation, where frost never comes, and the cane matures for grinding every day in the year, and where labor is still cheap? There would seem to be no limit to its production, except the capital that is put into it. But notwithstanding the present cheapness of labor — from twelve cents to twenty-five cents a day — Mexico, in order to compete with its cane sugar in the markets of the world with the beet sugar, needs capital for labor-saving machinery and improved processes. And it is not easy to get that capital. There are very few Mexicans who have the energy or the ability to handle it if they had it. And there is the smallest encouragement for foreigners to

go there. The law protects them in their rights just about in proportion to their ability to buy that protection from judges and the political officials. Every sort of hindrance is put upon business and commerce. There are heavy import duties, heavy export duties, stamp duties, octroi duties, duties between states. All this tax might be borne if it were steady and fixed at different ports and places of entry, and if the taxes and customs were honestly levied and paid into the treasury. But they are not. The state of things existing in Egypt years ago obtains now in Mexico. A great proportion, perhaps the larger part, of the tax and custom dues goes into the pockets of the officials, and not into the treasury of the government. If the taxes laid and wrung from natives and foreigners went into the treasury, Mexico would be out of debt and financially prosperous. I think no one can deny this. The officials all get rich, the natives are kept poor, and the foreigners live in uncertainty. There is no uniformity in the official plundering. Importers of goods prefer to bring them in by the Central Railway rather than by Vera Cruz, because they can make better terms with the inland officials. I heard the story of an English ship captain who brings cargoes to the west coast, which I have reason to believe to

be true. When he reaches a western port he anchors, and lands in his small boat and ascertains what terms he can make at the custom-house. If they are unsatisfactory he sails to another port, and then to another, and he finally takes his goods ashore at the port where he can make the best terms with the customs officials.

In order to encourage mining and other industries the government admits certain machinery free of duty. That is the law. But a foreigner seldom gets in any machinery without paying heavily on it, sometimes three or four hundred per cent. on its cost. It takes a good deal of money to convince the officials that it is machinery. If it is an engine, it of course comes in pieces. How can the officials tell that it is an engine? If it is a bar of steel, how can the officials tell that it is for a drill? An American miner who imported tubes to replace those worn out in his boiler had to pay six hundred dollars for what in the States cost him less than sixty dollars. A man on the line of the Central road waited weeks to get a carboy of sulphuric acid through the hands of the various officials. Its cost in El Paso was three dollars. He paid twenty-four dollars duties on it. When he opened the carboy it was empty! Two invoices have to be made out, one in Eng-

lish and one in Spanish. If any article is misspelled, not spelled exactly in the invoice as it is in the free schedule, it must pay duty. Of course it is the officials, and not the government, who profit by this clerical error. These are some of the hundreds of annoyances and hindrances in the way of doing business in Mexico. A foreigner must reckon, and does reckon, as a part of his necessary outlay, money to keep on the right side of the officials.

Of course the root of all these evils is not in the fact that Mexico is poor, and needs to squeeze everybody for a revenue, but in the fact that the government is purely a personal one, and run for the benefit, not of the people, but of the officials. And before this can be otherwise there has to be created in Mexico a public; and this will be a long and slow process with a mongrel people civilized on the Egyptian basis of mutual distrust.

III. — COATEPEC.

One inconvenience in traveling in Mexico is the bulky silver money with which the tourist must load himself down. Whenever I moved any distance from the capital I carried a shot-bag full of the cart-wheel dollars, which were worth from nineteen to twenty-four cents less than United States money. The Bank of London and South America, in Mexico, issues notes which are current in the States of Mexico and Michoacan, and perhaps elsewhere, but not good in the State of Vera Cruz, although the bank officials assured us they were. Consequently we have this anomaly, which is characteristic of Mexico, that while the railway company of the Mexican Railway received these notes for fare at the Mexican end, they would not take them at all at the Vera Cruz terminus. The first-class fare, in an exceedingly roomy and comfortable coach — 263 miles in about fourteen hours — was sixteen dollars. In the train was a carload of soldiers in white cotton uniform — a precaution against robbers which the government takes on no other railway in the

republic. At every station, also, a guard of half a dozen soldiers appeared on the platform, saluting as the train drew up. On the higher table-land these guards were mounted, and in their fine appearance reminded one of the famous *Guardias Civiles* of Spain.

The morning (February 26) was bright and a little cool; the twin snow peaks sparkled crystal white in the clear air. The road runs in the Mexican basin north of Lake Tezcoco, through a region highly cultivated, bristling with cacti of grotesque forms, the fields marked by lines of the maguey plant, frequent adobe villages, with clusters of the stately organ cactus grouped about the huts, the whole plain full of the stir of agricultural life and movement. As we rose among the hills the clean maguey plant was more abundant, and at the first station on the plateau we were at the chief shipping point of the region for pulque. Scores of casks of it were waiting shipment. It is from this station that a considerable portion of the thousands and thousands of gallons daily needed to supply the wants of the city are sent. At this station descended several passengers — English, American, and Mexican gentlemen, who had business at some hacienda, or were out for a day's shooting. Among them was a tall, bulky Mexican,

with gigantic frame and a baby face, who would have excited admiration anywhere. He wore an enormous hat, hung with at least a hundred dollars' worth of silver bullion, was armed with a revolver and a rifle, and had down each seam of his trousers a row of skulls and cross-bones in solid silver, each skull as big as a dollar. Everybody enjoyed the appearance of this splendid person, and no one more than he himself.

At an elevation of some eight thousand feet we were running over a nearly level table-land, with high mountains in the distance — a plain brown and cheerless. A strong wind was blowing, and the dust was intolerable. Soon the country became more broken, but with the same aspect of winter barrenness, without a tree to relieve the prospect, and the landscape frightfully gashed and gullied by the heavy summer rains. After we passed Apizaco, whence a road branches off to Puebla, the long noble mountain of Malintzi came in view on the south, and before we reached San Andreas the mass of Orizaba loomed up in the east over the dusty plain, two peaks, as seen from this point, the higher a long ragged mass, ever snow-clad, rising in majestic beauty between six and seven thousand feet above the enormous elevation of this vast wind-swept

plateau. From the uplands, from the coast, from the tropical valleys, from all points of view, this seems to be the prince of Mexican mountains.

At Esperanza we stopped for mid-day breakfast — an excellent, civilized, well-served meal. Here the peach-trees were in full bloom. A little further on, at Boca del Monte, the road begins its rapid descent to the coast level. I doubt if any other railway in the world, certainly none in Europe or North America, offers so many surprises to the traveler, or scenery so startling and noble in character. At Boca del Monte he looks down upon a wilderness of mountains. He is on a wide sterile plain in the temperate zone; in two hours he will be hurled down in the warmth and luxuriance of a tropical vegetation. Below are mountains, precipices, deep valleys, clouds, mists, which part occasionally and show green fields through the rifts. The descent seems impossible. But the train moves on in long curves round the edge of the mountain, doubling on itself, piercing a promontory, clinging to the edge of a precipice, leaping by a slender bridge from one hill to another, running backward and forward, but always down, down, until the mountains, nobly wooded, begin to rise above us; at one point we look sheer down the precipice upon

the plain and town of Maltrato, 2000 feet below. At Bota, a picturesque station clinging to the precipice, there are crowds of women and maidens offering fruits of all sorts, and pulque, which is not good lower down. Before we know it we have dropped down to Maltrato, a little interval green with grain and trees, hemmed in completely by steep mountains, a thriving town with many spires, 1691 metres above the sea.

From this little mountain plain we drop to a lower level, through a wonderful defile, narrow, rocky, with a clear impetuous stream at the bottom; and as we go down there is not so much the sensation of sinking as that the mountains are rising around us. The level to which we come is the fertile plain of Orizaba, 1227 metres above the sea. In the midst of it stands the handsome and highly civilized city of Orizaba — city and valley shut out from the world by immense mountain walls. On this plain we ran into the clouds that we had seen from the heights above, and passing it, we went swiftly down a broad valley, all grain, grass, turf even, pasture-lands, meadows, luxuriant cane fields, well watered and vernal, not unlike the valley of the Connecticut, except for the yucca and cacti and strange plants and flowers. From this valley we dropped again

down a narrow, rocky defile, passed through a tunnel, and came into a lower valley that leads to the city of Cordova. The whole of Mexico has this terrace character. It had rained a little at Cordova, and the vegetation showed a climate different from that on the west of the great mountain chain. All the east side of the mountains is liable in winter to "northers," which bring lower temperature, clouds, and occasional rain, so that the whole State of Vera Cruz is less brown and sere in the dry season than the western uplands. At Cordova we were in a semi-tropical region, 827 metres (about 2600 English feet) above the sea; we had dropped from winter into summer. On either side spread acres and acres of bananas, wide coffee plantations, agaves and pines, and brilliant flowering shrubs; one, the tulipan, as large as a peach-tree, with splendid scarlet flowers like the tiger-lily. At the station, pineapples and oranges in heaps were for sale. As we went down through the foot-hills, passing a finer gorge than any above, with a lovely water-fall, the foliage became more and more tropical; big-leaved plants grew rank along the way, and enormous convolvuli adorned the trees and hedges.

It was eight o'clock when we reached the absolute sea-level and Vera Cruz, and were

driven in a rickety carriage through a broad business street of two-story houses to the Hotel Diligencia, on the little plaza. The hotel, over the first story of shops, is entered by broad stone stairs in the inner court, and is itself an open hall about a court, the hall serving as assembly-room and dining-room, the chambers opening out from it. All the floors are brick. The rooms on the plaza front have balconies, and are primitively furnished, though comfortable enough, the beds being well protected by mosquito-netting. Rooms, furniture, attendance, all bespeak the negligence of a warm climate; it is, in short, a thoroughly Spanish-Mexican inn, and the table sustains its reputation.

Vera Cruz has a bad repute, and I suppose that, travestying the remark about Naples, I am expected to exclaim, "Smell Vera Cruz and die." But I found the little city of ten thousand people rather agreeable. It is, to be sure, when you are in it, an uninteresting city of two-story buildings of coral limestone, right-angled streets, perfectly flat, built on marshy ground, and the gutters are open and unsightly. The sidewalk crossings of the principal streets are peculiar; they are small bridges thrown over the gutters, but instead of being on the line of the sidewalk, they are set back in the

side street, so that the heedless pedestrian is likely at any moment to step into the ditch. But the houses are solid; many of them have pretty courts, and arcaded fronts are frequent. Shabby or elegant, it is thoroughly foreign and picturesque. By daylight it is shabby. The most pleasing view of the town is from the sea, with the castle of San Juan de Ulua in the foreground, and the water-line of arcaded buildings, with the towers and cathedral dome, behind. But the view of the blue Gulf, with its islands and sails, from the long pier, is as lovely as that from almost any Mediterranean port. The air was delicious, mild and yet not enervating. With the sea on one side and the mountains so near on the other, Vera Cruz ought, with a little engineering skill for drainage, to be perfectly healthful. But no summer passes without sporadic cases of yellow fever, and once in three years it is epidemic. To my senses the climate was most agreeable, and it was luxury to breathe the air after the thin atmosphere of the table-land. Indeed, I met many foreigners who were charmed with Vera Cruz. I know Americans who go there without fear in the summer, for the bathing, and find their stay most agreeable.

The scene on the plaza, which was brilliantly illuminated with both gas and the electric

lights, was exceedingly gay. The strong light brought into relief the cathedral dome and spires, the arcaded shops, and masses of shrubs and flowering plants, and the swaying arms of the whispering palms. It is thronged with promenaders, with loafers, with children, with ladies in fashionable attire, with officers and soldiers and servants — a thoroughly democratic assembly. The cool evening is the time for enjoyment and recreation, and everybody was out-of-doors; ladies in light muslins, armed only with the fan, went round and round arm in arm, chatting and laughing, never the sexes mingling in the tread-mill of the promenade, except in case of family groups; children, small girls and boys too young to be out without their nurses, were jumping the rope and playing other noisy games in a part of the plaza till after nine o'clock; men of the lower orders lounged about clad only in under-shirts and drawers, or their cotton trousers that had the effect of drawers; the clerks in the shops, dressed in the same summer style, and invariably with a cigar in the mouth, waited on their customers in languid indifference. All the wine shops and saloons were open and thriving; small tables encumbered the sidewalks, where the citizens sat in cool costume sipping mild potations. Everybody had the free and easy

air which is always begotten by confidence in steady good weather. The prominent impression, however, was of the mixed, mongrel race, a population lacking stamina, with Central American morals and Cuban inertia.

We were called at four o'clock of a foggy morning for the five-o'clock train to Jalapa. This journey is unique, for the whole distance of seventy miles is by tramway, except the first sixteen, to Paso de San Juan, on the Mexican Railway. After a cup of coffee in a cheap café by the station, I went to buy my tickets. The agent peremptorily refused to take the Bank of London notes, even at a discount. My servant expostulated with all the officials of the place. We could not think of remaining over in Vera Cruz another whole day. No exchange shops were open. Our money was perfectly good. Why then subject travelers to such annoyance? But it was no use to remonstrate, the officials were more than inexorable, they were indifferent; the train was just starting. I happened to remember that I had in my pocket a note of introduction to Colonel Thrailkill, the superintendent of the Jalapa road. I produced it. No one could read it, and for all they knew it might have been my hotel bill, but it sufficed. With a good nature as unreasonable as the former indifference, we were told to go aboard, and pay when we found the superintendent.

At San Juan the tram-cars were waiting, two, a first and a second class, each with four mules. Our car was very comfortable, roomy, with broad leather-cushioned seats, open at the sides, with a canopy to keep off the sun. At the signal the mules were let go, and they started on a run; they had their ten miles to make, and seemed bound to do it at a spurt. The country was at first level, the track good, but the car swung and swerved at the rapid pace, and our motion created a strong breeze; the fog was lifting, disclosing a luxuriant vegetation, palms, cacti, and large sycamore-trees, in form and color like our button-ball. The buzzards were still roosting in the trees, but the convolvuli were opening, and new bird notes were heard in the thickets. Everything was strange, exotic. Every moment a new object for exclamation. A handsome brilliant bird, as large as a hawk, with a long tail, darted from tree to tree with a harsh cry; it was the papey, a fleshless, useless bird; equally valueless was the coracoracaa, a smaller bird, like the pheasant; there was also the calandra, brilliant yellow; but most interesting of all the prima vera, a brown warbler, the bird of spring. Here and there, by the track, the Te del campo, a large lizard, hastened to get out of the way.

For we went thundering on, regardless of beast or bird. The mules have more vim and malicious energy than the steam-engine. Here and there a poor plantation was passed, and the house was invariably an open-work structure of cane, with a heavily thatched roof.

This is the old national road, the route of General Scott to the city of Mexico, following most of the way the ancient Spanish highway, often paved, and with substantial bridges. The old Spaniards had energy, and built roads and churches; the Mexicans have let them decay.

When the fog cleared, the sky was deep blue, and the air delicious. The peak of Orizaba appeared a white mass in the blue horizon, the base hidden by mountain ranges. The Puente Nacional is a fine, picturesque Spanish bridge with parapets, and here is a collection of mean adobe houses, and near them, in a thicket of cacti, the white palace of Santa Anna, falling to ruins. Here he had a considerable plantation. We passed in sight also of the battle-field of Cerro Gordo — a cheerless region. The villages on the line are much alike — usually one shabby street — with a mongrel population. The most curious shops are the butchers'; the meat hangs before the door in long strips, is usually black, and sold by the foot. At Rinconada, where we met the down train, we

stopped an hour for breakfast — a very palatable meal, with Mexican dishes, that are not bad, if you can make up your mind to them, especially the garnachas, compounded of maize, chopped meat, cheese, chiles, tomatoes, and onions. It is as good as the famous enchilada, which is chopped meat, raisins, almonds, and other condiments rolled inside of a tortilla. The passengers whom we met were covered with dust, and we were in the same state. The road had begun to ascend rapidly, and there were long stretches where we dragged slowly up the grades, in sun and dust, with only occasionally the exhilaration of a dash down-hill. The views became finer — great sweeps of rounded hills, with few trees, and mountains in the distance. Occasionally a hacienda was seen perched on a hill, or the square tower of an old church, but for the most part the country was monotonous in its winter barrenness. Still it was all novel, and our interest in the drive scarcely flagged when, at six o'clock, we galloped through the paved streets of Jalapa, and knew that we were 4000 feet above the sea.

Jalapa, the capital of the State of Vera Cruz, and the residence of the Governor, is an exceedingly interesting and pretty city, well paved, solidly built, picturesquely situated on the foot-hills, and surrounded by giant moun-

tains. The region is fertile, and it is just the right elevation for a delightful summer and winter climate. The views from the neighboring hills of the town, the uneven landscape, the semi-tropical vegetation, the snow mountains, are of almost incomparable beauty. The town itself, though the streets are winding, and many of them steep, and the houses have no great architectural pretensions, is clean, thrifty, and has a highly civilized aspect. There are many fine, substantial residences, which make no exterior show, but have lovely interior courts adorned with flowers, and vocal with fountains and the singing of birds. The rich interiors are evidence of wealth and refinement. The cathedral, a noble, handsome building, stands on a pretty plaza, but its situation on the side of a slope gives a unique effect to the interior. The floor, which is beautifully paved with tiles, slopes up to the altar at a decided angle, so that the worshiper, in advancing to the apse, has a sense of "going up to the house of the Lord." From the end of the street on which it stands, and indeed from other streets, there are charming vistas of the country, a country tropical in its foliage, and always with the background of purple mountains and snow domes. The noble Orizaba is the chief attraction, but the long range of the nearer Cofre de

Perote, which bars the way to the west, tawny and full of color, may be fairly termed magnificent. Its sharp ridges, 14,000 feet above the sea, are just low enough to escape the crown of perpetual snow.

The great market-place on Sunday morning presented a very animated spectacle. In the centre of the square, surrounded by arcaded buildings, is the market itself, a structure of pillars and roof; but the traffic was not confined to it. The whole plaza and all the surrounding corridors and the side streets were covered with goods, merchandise of all sorts, fruits, vegetables, pottery, and swarmed with buyers and sellers. This is the day when the Indians from the mountain villages come in with their grain, tortillas, preserves, basket-work, pottery, and "truck," and we saw here specimens of three or four tribes who adhere to their own dialects, and speak Spanish not at all, or very reluctantly. The Mexican men wore usually white trousers and white shirts, with perhaps a gay serape flung over the shoulders. The women, in plain frocks and the invariable ribosas, add little in the way of color to the scene, and almost nothing of beauty. They are not pretty; but so productive! Children swarmed. And the sad pity of it, to think that they will all grow up and become

Mexicans! There was a circus in town, and the members of it were making an advertising parade, riding about through the dense crowd, bespangled, brazen women and harlequin men, greeted with shouts and laughter. There is certainly nothing gloomy about Sunday in Jalapa.

We breakfasted with Colonel Thrailkill, the superintendent of the Jalapa road. The table was set in a veranda opening upon a pretty garden. Our host is a bird-fancier; but most residents in Mexico fall into this fancy, for in no other land are there birds of more delicious song and exquisite plumage. In shops, in house courts, in hotels, in bath-houses, everywhere one hears the music of caged birds. Dozens of cages hung about the veranda and in the garden, an unrivaled aviary of color and song. There were many brilliant small birds, but the favorite for its song — indeed, the queen of all Mexican singing birds — is the clarin. This is a shapely brown bird, in size and form not unlike the hermit-thrush, but its long, liquid, full-throated note is more sweet and thrilling than any other bird note I have ever heard; it is hardly a song or a tune, but a flood of melody, elevating, inspiring as the skylark, but with a touch of the tender melancholy of the nightingale in the night.

There was one of these birds filling the court with melody when I went to take a bath in Jalapa. Mexico has one evidence of civilization that some other civilized countries lack. In every city, in nearly every town, there are attractive bath-houses. However mean the town may be otherwise, the public bath-house is pretty sure to be neat and attractive, and is often highly ornamental and luxurious. There are bathing places of various degrees of cost, some plunges and pools where the populace can take a dip for a tlaco (about a cent and a half), and others more exclusive, where the common charge for hot and cold water, linen, soap, rubbing fibre, and oil is twenty-five cents. There is an inner court, luxuriant and beautiful with flowers and tropical foliage, surrounded by galleries in two stories, in the arches of which stand hundreds of the red flower-pots of the country brilliant with gay flowers. A fountain splashes in the centre, and caged birds, fluttering in the sunlight, sing, and add the element of gayety to the pretty scene. The bathing-rooms, opening on the gallery, are primitive, but clean; and if they were ruder than they are, the bather has so many senses gratified that in this respect at least he is willing to confess that the Mexicans excel us in civilization and refinement. At

Cuautla I saw a substitute for the Turkish bath, used sometimes also by our northern Indians. This was a stone structure, somewhere in the shade of the house enclosure, in shape like a long, low oven, with an opening in front large enough for a person to crawl in. In the interior are placed hot stones, water is poured upon these till the oven is full of steam, and then the patient crawls in, closes the aperture, and takes his steam bath.

From Jalapa the tramway extends nine miles southwest to Coatepec, which lies 500 feet lower than the capital, and enjoys a somewhat warmer climate. I went down there and spent some days with American and English friends who are engaged in coffee planting and in the preparation of the berry for the market. Coatepec is a typical Mexican town of the better sort, where nobody is very rich and nobody very poor. It is quite withdrawn from the world and its excitements — has no newspapers, no news, no agitations. The houses are mostly of one story, the streets are broad, well paved, and clean, and the country about is well cultivated. With the exception of the family with whom I stayed, and a Belgian who has lived there many years, I believe there are no foreigners. "Society" can hardly be said to exist, but a club had recently been formed; in

the bare rooms it occupied there were neither newspapers, books, nor any of the common paraphernalia of club life. So far as I could judge, the Mexicans here, who are of the ordinary yellow variety, have little intellectual life or ambition, or knowledge of the world. The chief occupation is coffee raising; all about the town are large and small plantations of it, intermingled with the banana and the plantain. The coffee-trees are seen in all the town gardens; and at this season, in the streets and court-yards, the coffee berry spread on mats was everywhere seen drying in the sun.

The house where I stayed, perhaps the most commodious in the place, is worth a line of description as typical of the better sort in Mexico. On the street it has a solid two-story front, with windows of glass, and is built around three sides of a very pretty court, which has a fountain, tropical plants and flowers, and singing birds in cages. Most of the houses have no glass, and the window openings, which close with inner shutters, are protected with bars of iron or wood, Spanish fashion, and the inmates have the appearance of being imprisoned. A gallery runs round the inner second story of the house I speak of, and is a most agreeable lounging-place day and evening. Here are books, music, the latest

English and American newspapers. In the sitting-room is a Steinway grand, which in this equable climate always keeps in tune. Every evening when there is music there is an orderly crowd in the street below. From this gallery is one of the most lovely prospects. One looks over the court and the garden beyond, over the huddled brown roofs of the town, the cathedral towers, the tall trees of the plaza with its arcaded buildings, over the rising nearest foot-hills and their semi-tropical vegetation, to the vast ridge of the Cofre de Perote, purple against the sky. Almost every feature of the landscape is Italian, and the view is wonderfully like that from the Villa Nardi in Sorrento of the gardens and amphitheatre of hills. But in one respect it far surpasses the famous Italian landscape. For there to the left rises in the blue sky the great dome of Orizaba, pure white, stainless, towering up like a cloud, its purity glowing in the rosy light of morning, or taking on a purple hue at evening. The place has altogether an air of repose, of stability, of softness, an indescribable charm.

This region is a paradise for the naturalist as well as the sight-seer. I could see, but cannot describe, hundreds of novel wild flowers and plants — plants aromatic, plants and vines with strange and brilliant blooms, tree-ferns, and all

sorts of feathery and graceful growths. My friend had a collection of butterflies and moths dazzling to the eyes of a novice, but of still more interest to the student; his explorations of the hills have discovered many species hitherto unknown to science.

Not only the naturalist, but the ordinary traveler, would find much that is interesting in exploring these mountains. In their recesses are villages that retain all the simplicity of primitive communities. I have some coins from one of them, Las Vegas, which reveal this. The subsidiary coinage in Mexico is in a very bad way. Much of it is local, and all of it is worn and defaced beyond recognition. Yet when the government attempted some years ago to call it in and substitute something else, the popular discontent was so great that it was obliged to desist. The commonest popular coin is the *tlaco*, usually a big round piece of copper worn perfectly smooth. Its current value is a little over a cent and a half. Two tlacos make a *cuartilla;* two cuartillas make a *medio;* two medios make a *real;* and two reals make twenty-five cents. The inhabitants of Las Vegas, being short of the small circulating medium, manufacture their own, which is taken and given in all purchases. One of the Las Vegas "coins" that I have is a small square piece of

soap, stamped with the value. The others are a square and a circular block of wood, over an inch in diameter, rudely whittled out, but stamped with name and value. Each of these passes for a tlaco. This seems to be an ideal sort of money; any one can have as much as he can make, and it has two advantages, — the wood will last, and the soap will redeem itself in time.

It is an unexciting life that one would lead at Coatepec amid all this natural beauty. Even the jail, which stands on one side of the plaza, has a friendly aspect. It is a two-story edifice, with pillars supporting the upper gallery. In the upper story is a rude hospital. The lower story consists of one long, obscure room, with a floor of earth, in which all the prisoners are huddled together. The guards pace the corridor outside, and watch the inmates through the grated windows. Prison reform has not yet reached Mexico.

There is one person in Coatepec who has ideas and tastes above his fellows. This is an honest carpenter, who is the antiquarian of the region. In his little stone cottage, overrun and half hidden by vegetation, he has collected Indian relics, stone idols and images, a few manuscripts and books, and a great variety of natural curiosities. The house stands on the

slope of a pure and pretty stream that runs through the village, and here he has laid out a garden that is unique. It is a miniature museum out-of-doors, planted with tropical shrubs and flowers, intersected with winding walks, along which stand Indian idols and fragments of antique sculpture, leading to quaint grottoes, paved and set with old tiles, bits of glass, and odd pieces of plate. The whole effect is fantastic and curious. This carpenter is an artist as well as antiquarian. A little while before my visit he had the misfortune to lose his third wife. A few days after he brought to my friend a skull and cross-bones, "life" size, beautifully carved in wood — perfect imitation of these emblems of mortality. The carving of these mementos was his grim way of taking consolation in his bereavement.

The country about Coatepec might well detain the traveler for weeks in agreeable excursions. The only drawback to riding is that all the roads are paved with round stones — at least all the roads connecting the principal villages. This is no doubt necessary in the rainy season, but it makes rough traveling. We rode one day over the rolling land, up hill and down, half a dozen miles to see the barranca of Tecalo. This is one of the minor barrancas, but it gives a good idea of these peculiar forma-

tions. A barranca is of the nature of a cañon; that is to say, it is a deep gorge, abruptly sinking below the level of the surrounding country, and has a stream at the bottom.

We had no sign of the barranca of Tecalo until we stood upon its brink, and looked down the rugged chasm a thousand feet. It is not a straight cut in the land, but winding, as if the stream had made it by slow process and irregular flowing, but its rocky sides are nearly perpendicular. We made our way by a zigzag path down one of the faces to the bottom, where we found a substantial bridge and a clear, rapid stream. Looking up the walls on either side we had a vision of wild and exquisite beauty. The sky was a narrow strip above. The walls of rock that shut us in were completely clad with vegetation, luxuriant, and wonderful in color. I know nothing to compare with it except the Latomia of Syracuse, in Sicily. Every foot of the precipices was covered with creepers, hanging vines, ferns exquisite in fineness, a mass of green and gray, in which gleamed flowers of scarlet and of a dozen bright hues, and here and there from ledges hung vegetable cables, ropes swinging freely in the air, with flowering plants at the end, like baskets let down. As we ascended from this bewildering vale of beauty, there

was great Orizaba hanging like a thunder-head in the sky.

Coatepec, Jalapa, all the eastern slope of the great mountains have a delightful winter climate, warmer than the Mexican table-lands by reason of the lower altitude, but, as I have said, not so arid, for the "northers" bring occasionally clouds and a damp atmosphere, which freshens the vegetation a little.

The return down the tramway from Jalapa to Vera Cruz was more rapid than the ascent — three hours shorter in time, and exciting and exhilarating. Whirling down this strange land in an open car, with the mules at a gallop, every mile offering some novel sight, is, I fancy, a unique experience in travel. It was half past four when we came to Vera Cruz, and we had time before nightfall to satisfy all our curiosity about the city. It cannot be said to improve much on acquaintance, but the sea view from the end of the long stone pier is very fine, with the old Castle, and the sailboats and steamers in the harbor. The town also is picturesque from this point, with its church domes and towers and the arcaded and balconied houses on the shore, painted in blue, red, yellow, and green, all faded into harmonious tones. Again we were reminded of Italy.

At sunset hundreds of buzzards came to

roost on the cornices of the plaza buildings, and the great dome of the cathedral was literally black with them. Gas and electric light again blazed, and the ceaseless promenading and animation of street life began. Children swarm, ladies in light muslins come out to enjoy the night air, men in white, and as thinly clad as possible, lounge listlessly about. The more we see of the people, the more inferior they seem — an easy-going, poor, mixed race.

We were up at five for the train. The night had been hot; with the long windows open on the plaza and sea side, there was not a breath of air — even a sheet was a burden. Till late at night there was noise and gabble in the streets, bells were chiming, and the big bell of the cathedral booming the hours. In the early morning the streets were almost deserted, here and there a *cargador* in white, or a woman, too early or too late, shuffled along the pavement. The big buzzards on the cathedral dome were beginning to stir in the early light, birds were singing among the whispering palms of the plaza, and paroquets called and screamed after us.

The road skirts the city and then runs straight to the foot-hills over a plain uninteresting except from the always picturesque palms. But at Cordova, a busy, pretty town

among the mountains, and overlooked by Mount Orizaba, the vegetation is very rich, the air is sweet with orange blossoms, the foliage is dark, the red coffee berries gleam in the banana plantations, the palm, the yucca, the cacti add to the tropical character of the picture, and brilliant flowers and rampant vines lighten and drape the landscape in color and grace. From here to Orizaba the scenery appeared more grand than in the descent, the mountains serrated, sharp peaks, blue and lovely in the distance, standing in a jumble, and the snow peak above them always wonderful. We drag up through the lovely gorge with the pretty waterfall, make the circle of the great loop in the road, cross a high bridge, pass though several tunnels, and are in the shut-in plain of Orizaba. No description can do justice to this wonderful road.

Orizaba, which is about 4000 feet above the sea, is a favorite winter resort, but it is too warm in summer for those accustomed to the air of the table-land. It is, however, a beneficial change for many from the very rare air of the city of Mexico. The city itself is very well built, has a big and varied market, and an alameda as fine as any in the republic, with splendid trees and charming *allées*, and is bounded on one side by a swift stream, which

sweeps the base of a precipitous mountain wall. This situation adds nobility to its loveliness. From my window and balcony at the Hotel La Borda I looked up a clear, rapid stream in a green setting of foliage, with white houses and gardens beyond, a white spire, and a vast background of mountains, the shoulder of Orizaba visible, but not its snow. The snow peak is not in sight from the central part of the city itself. Orizaba is interesting for a few days' sojourn, and pleasant excursions may be made from it into the hills and the lateral valleys, but it is too much shut in for my taste.

It is a fairly enlightened and well governed city, and has very good schools, where English is taught, after a fashion, and on which the attendance is, I believe, compulsory. While I was there, a German, whose knowledge of English was very limited, was holding, by the aid of the government, a normal school, to teach teachers how to teach English and German, and he had some eighty-five pupils, old and young, from the various towns in the State of Vera Cruz.

In traveling here and elsewhere in Mexico, an American is struck with the little deference paid to women. No matter who is present, everybody smokes, at the table, in the cars, even those of the first class, in the horse-cars,

everywhere, there is no escape from the smoke. But, then, most of the Mexican women smoke also.

It was now the fifth of March, and signs of spring multiplied; as we ascended the mountains the young foliage was almost as bright in hue as ours is in autumn. This drapery of color was very pleasing. We could imagine what Mexico would be in its renewed vegetation. The train moved slowly up the slopes, conquering the height foot by foot. The valleys deepened, the mountains sunk. When we reached the summit at Boca del Monte, it seemed as if we must have climbed to the top of the world. But lo! there in the sky was the white dome of Orizaba, apparently just as high above us as ever.

IV. — MORELIA AND PATZCUARO.

A BRANCH of the Mexican National Railway (which is all narrow guage) runs west from the city over the mountains to Toluca, thence turns northwest to Acambaro; at this station a branch runs southwest to Morelia and Patzcuaro; the main line continues northward, crosses the Mexican Central at Celaya, and goes on to San Miguel de Allende. From this point it is expected to continue through San Luis Potosi to Saltillo, completing the connection with the north. When this gap of 350 miles is spanned, there will be an all-rail route from San Antonio to the city of Mexico, and the railway distance between the two cities will be shortened by some 800 miles.

The road out of the Mexican basin followed the winding narrow valley of a pretty stream, offering at first pleasing and then grand views, until at the station of Salazar it reaches the summit and an altitude of 10,027 feet. At this station it is always cool, there is a frost every night in the year, and the passengers who got out for a glass of pulque or a cup

of coffee and a tortilla were cheered by the warmth of a stove in the agent's shanty. This was the former diligence route, and this mountain region was the scene only three or four years ago of numerous robberies and murders. The diligence was certain to be attacked if it carried passengers who were suspected of having valuables. The robbers in all cases were the Mexican citizens of the neighboring villages, and never the Indians. These Mexicans, who seem to have been sustained by public opinion, simply varied the monotony of their ordinary occupations by highway robbery. If there were any political disturbance, throwing the administration into confusion, these good people would undoubtedly take to the road again. Here, as elsewhere in the republic, the more trustworthy part of the population are Indians and not the hybrids.

From the summit the descent was rapid. Twilights are brief in this latitude, and it was dusk at a little after seven (we had left Mexico at five), when we came to the station in the plain of Toluca, and took the tram-cars for the city, distant a mile and a half. Toluca, one of the most beautifully situated and pleasing cities in Mexico, is seated on gentle hills rising out of an extensive and fertile plain, and is about 8500 feet above the sea.

We were set down at the hotel Lion de Oro, as the decorated sign which the French proprietor has brought with him testified. This hotel, which is of two stories, built about a court, with spacious rooms, prepossessed us in favor of the city, for it is neat and comfortable, and by far the best and cleanest hotel we found in the republic.

The following morning was splendid, the air elastic, inspiring. I do not know which most to admire, the view of the town from a neighboring hill, or the view of the lovely valley and its guardian mountains from the terrace. The snow mountain of Toluca, whence the runners in the old Spanish days and the runners now bring the snow for cooling drinks, is a beautiful object in this clear atmosphere. The city is well paved and substantially built, has some fine old churches and towers, and is not only the cleanest city in Mexico, but is cleaner than any city in the United States. One of the small features of the place that attracted attention was queer frames, skeleton structures, like the electric light stands, with small tanks on top. One of these stood in the Governor's garden next door to the hotel. The frame was sixty or seventy feet high and gayly painted; on top was a platform with a gay railing supporting the tank, and this was surmounted by

a pagoda canopy, also brilliantly painted, and ornamented with images of large gilded butterflies on each corner. These things are the fashion here, and there is a strife between the wealthy citizens to have the highest and gaudiest. Water is pumped into the tanks, and we were told that they are used as shower-baths.

The town has a small plaza prettily planted, with two fountains and an abundance of flowers ; at this season it was carpeted with violets and daisies. One of the most interesting pieces of architecture is a chapel attached to one of the ancient churches, which has a dome covered with colored mosaics very Oriental in character. The market hall is a large, long building, with the roof supported on heavy Egyptian columns, painted in high colors — another of the many Oriental suggestions in Mexico. In the arcades about the market square are many little eating and drinking shops. The place on Sunday morning was crowded with traffickers, and the objects for sale were spread all about — fruits, meats, vegetables, all sorts of merchandise, coarse and brilliantly painted pottery, rope like the Manila, made from the maguey, and pretty basket-work and mats. Large numbers of Indians had come in from the mountain villages. They were usually short, thick-chested, and heavy-limbed, and

with black coarse hair and broad faces and high cheek-bones — very Indian in appearance. The women were clad in two pieces of blue cloth, wrapped about the body so as to leave the arms and legs free and the breasts convenient to the calls of their offspring. Every woman was nursing a baby, and even the little girls commonly had charge of a more helpless specimen of their race. I suppose that these aborigines are substantially what they were when Cortez conquered the country, with the same native vigor and inferior semi-barbarous aspect, with their habits perhaps a little modified by a pseudo-Christianity.

In the afternoon, an unusual thing for the season, there was a brief thunder-shower with hail, with loose high-sailing clouds and fine effects of shadows on the plain. We saw the sun set from a sharp hill overlooking the town, where there are the earthworks of what may have been a fort. The prospect was superb, one of the rare views of the world, over the flat-roofed town out upon the vast green plain, the mountains lovely in the slant light, and the peak of Toluca rosy. The notable and surprising thing, however, was the high and careful culture. The plain was like a garden, the only lines of demarcation being rows of the maguey plant. We had not expected such careful agriculture

in Mexico. The great squares of brown earth, ready for the seed or newly sown, were tilled as finely as garden mould, and alternated pleasingly with the vast patches of green wheat and barley. We were told that the weeds in the wheat fields are pulled up by hand, and the whole country gave evidence of this minute personal cultivation. The effect of this high culture was to give a very refined landscape. The view was very extensive, and grew more and more attractive with the light on the church towers and the round hills in the valley; and when at last a rainbow spanned the plain, over which thin mists were trailing, the prospect was nothing less than enchanting. This is one of the richest valleys in the republic. It produces a winter crop by irrigation, and a summer crop in the rainy season.

The patience of the traveler is tried in two ways on the railway to Morelia — by the uncomfortable cars with small windows, from which it is difficult to see anything, and the time consumed. We were twelve and a half hours in going about two hundred miles. After emerging from the fertile plain of Toluca we ascended into a broken country, the road rising and falling among the hills with many a long loop and curve. Many of these curves were unnecessary feats of engineering, laid out when

the builders expected the promised bonus of ten thousand dollars a mile; the curves are now being reduced, and the road shortened proportionally. The view was interesting, and often wide and glorious, the mountains fine in form, and the valleys irrigated, green, and lovely. Even the uncultivated spaces were covered with wild growth, among them a very sweet-scented acacia-bush with bright yellow flowers. We breakfasted at Flor de Maria, a neat station with a good table, and took coffee at four o'clock at Acambaro in a station-shanty kept by Mexican Jim, who has the reputation among foreigners of being probably the most honest Mexican now living. He was for many years the trusted body-servant of General McClellan during his Northwestern explorations. Toward evening we ran along the shore of Lake Cuitzco, a large body of water, containing many islands, and surrounded by noble mountains graceful in form. It seemed to me more beautiful than Lake George or Lake Winnipiseogee; but perhaps the luminous warm atmosphere enhanced its beauty, for Mexico certainly has this advantage over our Northern landscapes in an atmosphere full of color, which drapes hills and valleys like a delicate garment, as in southern Italy and Sicily. We came to the Morelia station after

dark, and took the horse-railway to the town and the hotel Michoacan.

Morelia, the present capital of the State of Michoacan, is a city of, I should think, fifty thousand to sixty thousand inhabitants, bright, cheerful, well built, surrounded by a lovely hilly country, and at an elevation of about fifty-five hundred feet. I am conscious that I am open to the charge of enthusiasm in general expressions of admiration for this charming and interesting city, and I have hardly space in this paper for details to make good my partiality. It is unnecessary to go elsewhere for a more delicious climate than we found there in the month of March. The charm of the air is indescribable, so fresh, so balmy, so full of life, days of strong, genial sun, nights of mild serenity, so dry and temperate that we sat in the public square at midnight without need of a wrap.

The night of our arrival the town seemed to be *en fête*. The large Zocolo, or principal plaza, prettily laid out in flower beds and winding walks and fine trees, seats and music stands, with several fountains, was gayly illuminated with Chinese lanterns and thronged with promenaders. In the streets and open spaces were erected hundreds of stands for the sale of sweets and native edibles, lighted by flaming

torches, which threw a fantastic light upon the strange groups about them. These street venders are always to be seen at night cooking their indescribable "messes" in the open air, and many of the inhabitants seem to take their suppers regularly at these cheap stands. In the pagoda a fine military band was playing the music of Beethoven and Wagner. It was the famous band of the Eighth Regiment, the nucleus of that great orchestra which made such a musical sensation at the New Orleans Exposition. The air was sweet with the odor of the night-blooming jasmine. In respect of its music, its gardens, cultivation of flowers, and its simple architecture, Morelia shows a high degree of civilization.

I shall speak of some of the peculiar features of the place without any attempt at exhaustive or systematic description. The hotel accommodation is inadequate, and the restaurant frequented by strangers is third class. The new hotel, slowly rising room by room, on the plaza, promises to change all this. The cathedral has massive towers and great domes, and although of the Spanish composite order of architecture, is a noble building, the finest in Mexico. In full moonlight, or in the rosy light of sunset, it is wonderfully beautiful. In the large tower hangs the monster bell, which is rarely sounded,

but there are many others of moderate size which are continually chiming. All these bells, and indeed nearly all the bells in the republic, are remarkable for sweetness and softness of tone. It is very rarely that one hears a harsh bell. They are exceedingly melodious and pleasing. It is sometimes explained that this is due to the mixture of silver in the bell-metal, and that the new bells are cast from old metal. I believe that the chief reason why the Mexican bells are so much more musical than ours is that the Mexican bells are artistically made, shaped with reference to tone, thin at the edge, each one a work of art intelligently manipulated, not mechanically cast without reference to the sound it shall produce. The great bells are struck with a clapper, and not swung. There would be much less objection to the use of church bells in the United States — the harsh and barbarous jangle which shocks the Sunday stillness — if our bells had any of the musical quality of the Mexican. The houses of Morelia are generally plain and mostly of one story, but in the principal streets and about the plaza are many buildings of fine proportions, and simple, noble façades, with elegant carvings in low relief. Even the new buildings in light cream-colored stone preserve the old elegance, the architects being as yet untouched

by the modern craze for monstrous roofs, oddity, and over-ornamentation.

This is not the best season for fruits and flowers, but the spacious market was well supplied with tropical fruits, great variety of bananas and plantains, oranges, mangos, the several sorts of the zapota family, the chirimoya, the granadilla, and so forth; and the abundance of flowers of the common sort — roses, carnations, and sweet-peas — testify to the popular love of them.

At the end of the main street begins the Calzada — literally, the "shod-place." Here, on and near an open square, are the bath-houses — cheap swimming tanks for the populace — and the decorated courts and apartments for the more wealthy. Not far off is a most humane institution — a horse-bath — a large deep reservoir, entered by an inclined plane, where the horses are taken and enjoy a refreshing swim. The Calzada is half a mile of large ash-trees arched over a wide paved trottoir, with a continuous row of high-backed stone benches on each side. It is a famous place for promenading in the late afternoon. The drive runs on each side, fronted by a row of low, plain residences with pretty courts and flower-gardens. Upon some of the walls we saw the gorgeous camelina (or Bourganvilla) vine, the terminal leaf like a flower, some red and others purple.

The stroller, who is detained by the pleasantness of this shaded Calzada, is surprised to find at the end of it new wonders — an open, tree-planted space; in front of him a picturesque old convent-church with quaint towers, and to the right the great arches of aqueducts and entrancing vistas of forest and mountains. As he advances step by step and the view opens, his wonder increases. The place is unique, bewildering. The charm of the party-colored church is increased by rows of ancient cedars in front, which all lean slanting across its façade, as if swept by a strong wind. Some say that an earthquake gave these venerable trees this cant. To the right, paths lead under the arches of the aqueduct to the Alameda. The aqueduct, reminding one of the noble structures that stride across the Roman Campagna, comes in from the mountains, and skirts the Alameda, while a branch at a sharp angle runs toward the town. Thus a series of noble interlacing arches is presented to the eye as one approaches from the Calzada, and the view through these is so novel and beautiful that the spectator is literally spell-bound with delight. The glimpse of forests and purple hills through the arches is lovely, and the perspective of the giant aqueduct across the plain to the mountains is noble.

Passing under the arches, we enter the Ala-

meda, which is unlike any other in the world. It is at once a forest and a tangled garden, once trim and well kept, now more beautiful than ever in its neglected luxuriance and reminiscence of former order. It has the charm of some old garden of a once magnificent estate. The grounds are a couple of miles in circumference, circled by a charming drive. The original plan seems to have been paths like the spokes of a wheel from a "round" in the centre, but outside this round there are other centres and intersecting walks, offering in every direction the most charming vistas, through arching trees and vines and *allées* of flowers and tropical foliage. Although this park is public ground, individuals have obtained the privilege of living here and cultivating vegetable gardens and flowers, and here and there the wanderer comes across a half-ruined cottage hidden in the rampant vegetation, surrounded by hedges of roses, acres of sweet-peas, acres of carnations, a wilderness of scent and bloom. Crumbling monuments, circular seats of stone about the ruins of a fountain, pretty arbors, grass-grown paths — all formality lost in the neglect of man and the kindly luxuriance of nature. Such glorious foliage, such an inspiring, sparkling air, such a tender blue in the sky! I thought at the time that I had seen nothing of the kind

lovelier in the world. And the whole scene is touched with the pathos of neglect and decay.

On the afternoon of Shrove-Tuesday all the city was out *en fête*. A band was playing in the Calzada; its benches were filled; its pavement was thronged. It was a fête of the common people, only now and then members of the better class mingling with the throng or passing in carriages. All the women of this class were invariably overdressed in exceedingly bad taste, in flamboyant colors of blue and green. Some very young girls appeared, mincing along in ridiculous costume — silk gowns made in the waist exactly like those of grown women, but with short pleated skirts, long silk stockings, and white satin shoes. There were a few maskers and mummers rushing through the crowd in fantastic costumes, but the mass of the people were of the peasant class. And what a kaleidoscopic scene it was of shifting oddity and color — every complexion invented by man, from black to cream — black hybrids, yellow hybrids, Spanish types, Indian types — all a jumble of miscegenation, in bright serapes, graceful ribosas, big hats, wonderfully decorated trousers; and most notable of all, the dudes of the city, slender-legged, effeminate young milksops, the fag-end of a decayed civilization, without virility or purpose. I no-

ticed that every woman, every child, and some of the men of the lower class were marked on the forehead with the sign of the cross in lamp-black, and following the throng into the chapel, I saw the priests affixing this mark of consecration to the brows of the devout. It was altogether an orderly, polite, pleasing crowd, amusing itself simply and heartily in the sunshine. Nearly everybody was nibbling a head of lettuce. The Morelia lettuce is trained to grow in long blanched heads, and is the tenderest and sweetest in the world. It is delicious eaten without any condiment. All about the place piles of it were for sale, and each head was decorated with a scarlet poppy. These people have an artistic eye for color and effect. In the Alameda the scene was fully as picturesque, if less animated. In all the *allées* were seen pretty family groups, gay companies picnicking under the trees, and making merry with the simplest fare. That night, with music and moonlight in the balmy air, the plaza was as gay as a theatre; the common people were cooking and eating a sort of Shrove-Tuesday cake, tortillas fried and sprinkled with sugar and grated nutmeg and cinnamon; innumerable little fires of soft wood in elevated iron braziers cast a fantastic light upon the motley groups. These people have the secret of enjoyment at small expense.

Morelia has a thriving state college in the nature of a general school for boys of all grades and ages, having a well-ordered library, mostly ecclesiastical, but with a fair collection of Greek and Latin classics, and some interesting old Spanish books. No attempt is made to keep up with modern literature.

Morelia is apparently well ordered, and the State of Michoacan is at present peaceful. But I could not find that the people, though there is nominally general suffrage, have anything to do with the government, or take any interest in politics. Officers are retained or elected as dictated by the central personal government. It was the observation of American and English residents that the elections are a farce. Whatever votes are registered on election day, the result is predetermined. I was told of the case of a foreigner who was employing a couple of hundred men in a mining operation which would be seriously interrupted if the men took a day or two off to vote. He stated his case to a government official, and was told that he might cast the votes of the men himself; and this he did. If the most of the officials, including the judges, are not venal, they are much belied by common report. Foreigners engaged in business reckon as part of their ordinary and necessary expenses money

paid to judges and other officials to secure simple justice. In mentioning this I only repeat common talk. The Mexicans themselves rarely have confidence in each other.

A great complaint throughout the republic is the rapacity of the customs and other officials. There is little uniformity as to duties exacted. There are, as before said, not only the national duties, but duties on the border of each state, and the entrance to each city. The laws seem to be arbitrarily changed by the central authority, and the regulations are exceedingly vexatious to business men, who never know what to depend on.

The republic sequestrated the monasteries and nunneries, and confiscated most of the church property. It also forbade all public religious processions, and the wearing in public of clerical garments. The priests are therefore not generally distinguishable by their dress. In Morelia, however, owing to the intense ecclesiasticism of its population, this rule was never severely enforced, and the priests retained a clerical garb. I think lately that there is visible in the country at large a little relaxation of severity against ecclesiasticism. If common report is accepted, the lives of most of the priests are not morally reputable. It would be unjust to take street gossip as final

evidence of the morality of a people; but some facts are indisputable. As a rule the Indians are not formally married, but they are said to be generally faithful in their domestic relations. For the ordinary Mexicans marriage is difficult, because of its expense and the many vexatious requirements. Informal relations are therefore common. In the higher classes it is said that the state of morals is little better than in the lower, but intercourse between the sexes is hedged about by the old Spanish customs. Women are watched and secluded. Chances of acquaintance are rare. The theory is that couples who are to marry never see each other alone till after the marriage ceremony. But human nature is human nature as well in Mexico as elsewhere, and opportunities are found or made. Idle young men and equally idle young women, who neither read nor work, will exercise their ingenuity.

Courting is an elaborate science, and has a literature and code of its own. I saw one afternoon a slender young gentleman, in the modified Mexican costume of the dandy of to-day, leaning against a column of an arcade on the plaza, and ogling and making signs toward a window in the second story of a house diagonally across from where he stood. My companion, who knew the young gentleman, offered to

engage him in conversation, while I sauntered along and looked up to the balcony, at the open window of which sat the young lady who was replying to the signals of her lover. The young man was "playing the bear." Everybody who passed knew it, and accepted as a thing of course this semi-public furtive courtship. The lovers were using the sign-manual of the deaf-mutes. Their courtship had been going on for a year. It might continue for two or three years longer, and then, if the parents consented, it might end in marriage. In theory the young people would never have an opportunity of meeting until such time as the parents arrange the betrothal, when the young man would be admitted to the house, and see his sweetheart in the presence of her relatives. In point of fact, he would come at night, especially if the night were dark, and stand under her window and talk with her, bring her flowers and fruit, exchange notes, and perhaps climb up and kiss her hand. Generally the lover bribes the servant to carry messages, and secretly to admit the lover to the apartment of his mistress. The young ladies are very devout in attendance on church services, for to church the lovers go also, and while the demure maid is kneeling beside her dueña or her mother, the young gentleman is

kneeling against a pillar near by, and the two are talking with their fingers. When the apartments of the family of the beloved are on the ground-floor, courtship is carried on more satisfactorily at night through the window-bars. This policy of repression and seclusion, of distrust of the honor and virtue of women, has its natural result. Courtship becomes intrigue, and clandestine meetings are always more dangerous than open intercourse. Lovers are proverbially ingenious. There is on sale everywhere and in universal use a cheaply printed little pamphlet entitled "El Secretario de los Amantes." It is the guide and hand-book of lovers. It contains the language of flowers, the significance of the varied wearing and handling of the sombrero, the language of the fan, the language of fruits, the meaning of the varied use of the handkerchief, emblems for designating the hours of day and night in making appointments, the use of the numerals in cipher writing, several short chapters on the conduct of a love affair, and the deaf-mute alphabet for one hand. This literary gem seems to be more studied than any other in the republic.

On the 12th of March we took the train for Lagonilla (a distance of some twenty miles, or two hours in time), then the end of the rail. The road is now finished to Lake Patzcuaro.

The morning, as usual, was lovely, the air light, warm, superb. We had a fair view of Morelia as we left it and ascended; its domes and towers and situation in the plain gave it an Oriental appearance, and suggested, without much resembling it, Damascus. The country was irrigated in spots, and the vivid green patches with the hills and trees made a charming landscape.

At Lagonilla our party of seven had chartered the four-wheeled diligence, a Concord coach, at a cost of twelve dollars, for the drive of fifteen miles, in three hours, over the wretched road to Patzcuaro. A high wind was blowing, and the way was exceedingly dusty. In all this region in the month of March a wind from the southwest arises about ten o'clock, and increases in violence all day till sunset, when it dies away. The country was rolling, much broken, cultivated in irrigated patches, the fine mountains in the distance. We passed through two or three paved, picturesque, and dirty villages. As we ascended, the weather grew cooler, the wind increased in force. The road was very bad, full of stones, bowlders, and pitch-holes, in places almost impassable. The line of the railway was most of the time in sight, and at intervals we encountered gangs of workmen throwing up slight embankments.

The mode of working was peculiar. No wheelbarrows were used. Each workman had a small piece of matting or cloth about as big as a large dinner napkin. This he filled with dirt in the trenches, took up by the corners, and carried up and emptied on the embankment. Occasionally he would take up a chunk of earth in his hands. The pay of laborers was twenty-five cents a day. The effort to make them use wheelbarrows in grading had failed (many of the laborers carried the barrows on their heads after they had filled them), and the engineers insisted that the men accomplished more work in a day than a like gang would with barrows. The reason was that time is lost in filling the barrows and wheeling them up the roundabout plank inclined planes; the laborers run up and down the embankment quickly, and move more dirt in a day than by the method in use with us.

Two miles outside of Patzcuaro we struck a wide road paved with small bowlders which nearly shook the coach to pieces. No sort of riding could be greater torture. The village lies in a hollow, a league from the lake, parts of which only are visible from certain elevations in the town. If it lay in sight of the lake, it would have one of the most beautiful situations possible. The town is *sui generis*,

primitive and solid, and as yet very little affected by intercourse with the outside world. The new railway station is on the shore of the lake, two or three hundred feet lower than the town, and a couple of miles distant from the hollow in which it nestles. It has a large plaza, shaded by splendid ash-trees, and surrounded by arcades and colonnades, in which are very inferior shops. Friday is market-day, but there was no great display, the chief sellers being Indians from the neighboring villages, who brought in pottery, tortillas, and wilted vegetables. On a second plaza of good size, which has trees and large water-tanks like the larger one, stands the hotel Concordia, a cheerful house with an inner court, and flowers and shrubs in red pots, and a wretched restaurant. The roofs of the town are tiled, and most of the houses, being of one story, have projecting cornices of wood with supporting beams. Judging by the number of old churches and suppressed monasteries, the place had once considerable ecclesiastical importance. Some of the churches have the beauty that is given by towers and archaic statuary and the mellow colors of faded reds and yellows. One of the suppressed convents, with a church attached, has a pretty Italian sort of court, sweet with the perfume of orange blossoms — a meditative

place of cloistered seclusion. In its demesne I saw two La Marque rose-trees, fully twelve feet high, with stems five inches in diameter, perfect little trees, the umbrella-shaped tops covered with roses. The town is irregular and hilly, but all paved very roughly. On its highest elevation is a third open place, planted with noble trees, and fronted by the grim walls and gaunt church of an extinct monastery. On a hill to the westward is a ruined church, which is approached by a broad avenue of superb old ash-trees — a tree which attains great dignity in this region — and lined with prayer stations. Everywhere are the signs of a former haughty ecclesiastical domination, which perhaps reached its acme of cost and splendor in the days of Philip II.

Patzcuaro gave few evidences of enterprise or business life, but it has many well-to-do citizens of cultivated manners and kindly hospitality. To some of these gentlemen we were indebted for many favors: they procured for us horses and mules; they planned excursions, and accompanied us on them; they brought us sweetmeats; they entertained us with the tinkle of guitars, and they were very solicitous about undue exertion or exposure, and the violation of their sanitary rules. One of the rules was never to bathe after a ride on horseback,

not even to wash the face or the hands. It was considered very dangerous. These people knew nothing of the world, very little of the republic of Mexico, were to the last degree provincial, but had all the elaborate courtesy of manner that is called Spanish.

The inhabitants I suppose are generally poor, and live closely, but in a week's sojourn there we saw little abject poverty, or what was considered so there. The traders are sharp and not much to be depended on, the mechanics are dilatory, the temper of the whole people is that of procrastination. We saw very little drunkenness. The people drink to some extent pulque and a mild beer, and perhaps some strong liquors, but usually coffee, water, and drinks mildly flavored with limes and oranges.

Perhaps this is as good a place as any to say that Mexico, in my observation, notwithstanding its facilities for making intoxicating beverages from the cane and the maguey, and the absence of all restricting legislation, is generally a temperate country. In some regions much pulque is drank, and often much aguardiente (a fiery sort of high wine), and in the purlieus of the city of Mexico I saw many drunken men and women; but I believe the great body of the people, like the Spaniards in Spain, are essentially temperate.

One of our first walks out of the town was three quarters of a mile to the top of a hill, where there is a long stone bench and a view of the lake. It is a favorite resort of the townspeople. Here on one occasion we encountered a party of revelers making too free with the bottle; but this was exceptional. From this elevation we went on a mile further to the top of a mountain (which had two years ago an unfavorable reputation as the lookout of brigands), overlooking the town, the lake, long ranges of mountains, and a great stretch of country.

The lake is irregular in shape, perhaps twenty miles in its widest diameter, filled with islands, and surrounded by shapely and noble mountains. On two of the islands are churches and fishing villages. The fields on the border are highly tilled. I counted as many as sixteen villages in sight. The view was inexpressibly lovely. The lake can be compared with any of our finest in beauty of outline, and it surpasses most of them in mountain surroundings. In its contour, steep hills, signs of an ancient and decayed civilization in villages and church towers, it has more likeness to the Italian lakes than to any in the United States, and the enveloping atmosphere has a color and warmth which ours usually want.

On our walk we picked as many as thirty varieties of wild flowers.

At Patzcuaro is sold a great quantity of Indian pottery, made at Tzintzuntzan and other villages, mostly in the shape of water jars and coolers. These utensils, even the most rude in finish and the cheapest, are almost invariably beautiful, one might say classic forms; and made of red clay, well baked, they have a color rivaling Pompeiian ware. Some of the jars are of enormous size, as big as those described in the story of the Forty Thieves in the "Arabian Nights," and each one capable of containing and concealing a man. The vase is often ornamented with geometric designs in faint dark color, suggesting the Greek taste and skill. I found in Mexico a great variety of excellent common pottery, exceedingly cheap, usually ornamented, sometimes with barbaric tints in colors, but always effective. The most barbaric ornamentation has an instinct for effect in it which is truly artistic; in the crudest ware with the most splashy decoration there is something pleasing, varied, artistic, a native grace which is wanting in what we call civilized work. At Teluca we purchased plates of a lovely cream-color, with quaint designs entirely Persian in style. At Patzcuaro we found by chance, for it was not displayed for sale, some-

thing that interested us more than anything else made in Mexico. This was a true iridescent ware. The specimens we obtained were small round and rectangular plates. The lustre is the true Saracenic, Alhambra, or Gubbio lustre, the real iridescence, shimmering, shifting colors in changing lights, ruby, green, blue. Would it not be singular if this lost art were preserved in Mexico? The ware is rude. The makers of it have not the certainty of producing a particular color in a picture which distinguishes the Gubbio work, and it lacks the elegance and the glaze, the solidity and fineness, of the Alhambra tiles. But it is genuine iridescence. The plates are exceedingly thin and brittle. The lustre seems to be metallic, of copper, and the effect to be produced by subjecting the ware to an exceedingly high temperature, a firing so fierce that the clay is apparently disintegrated, and has lost its ringing quality.

It was impossible during our stay to obtain definite information as to the place of its manufacture. It might be made, some one thought, in the city of Puebla, but pueblo is the general name for an Indian village, and the seller, when questioned, was doubtful. Several Mexican gentlemen of intelligence assured me that it came from Santa Fe, a small Indian village on

the north shore of Lake Patzcuaro, and that it was only brought in on Palm-Sunday. Subsequently we learned that this extraordinary pottery is made in the little mountain village of San Felipe Torresmochas, in the State and near the town of Guanajuato.

V.—TCZINTCZUNTCZAN—URUAPAN.

A LITTLE company of Americans and Mexicans, attended by a single *mozo*, or servant, rode on the 15th of March, on horses and mules, from Patzcuaro to Tczintczuntczan, four leagues Spanish, or about fifteen miles. The trip might have been made on the lake in the long Indian dug-outs, but at this season of the year the strong wind from the southwest which invariably rises before noon renders the lake very rough for row-boats.

The day was glorious and the ride thoroughly exhilarating. Nothing else that I know equals the pleasurable excitement of being on horseback on a sparkling morning, and setting out on a journey every step of which is full of novelty. We took at first the paved road toward Morelia, but soon turned off across fields, the ancient way to Tczintczuntczan, which is one of the oldest of Indian villages, and was formerly the capital of the State of Michoacan. In the low foreground, when we turned off, we had the lake, and beyond, high, pointed, irregular, silvery mountains.

We crossed a shallow arm of the lake on a causeway and an ancient bridge. Thousands of black ducks, and now and then a white crane, enlivened the lagoon, and at the bridge stalwart Indian fishermen were hauling a seine, their dug-out moored to the bank. This boat, hollowed out from a tree trunk, was thirty feet long, deep, broader at the bottom than at the top. Some of the Indian boats are much longer than this, and their size testifies to the noble forest growth. They are propelled by poles, and by paddles shaped like a warming-pan, and are said to be perfectly safe. We skirted the lake by a very stony road for some distance. On the way we constantly met Indians, bare-legged and bare-breasted, wretchedly clad, the men bending under enormous crates of pottery, and the women moving with the quick trot peculiar to them, on their way to market. In old days this was a sort of royal road, and it is now so much traveled by foot-men that women find it profitable to set up shelves along the way for the sale of food. We crossed another long causeway, through a lagoon, sedgy, silvery, swarming with ducks; the scene was very pretty and peaceful, and the view combined the elements of loveliness and grandeur.

Winding up and around slight elevations

through a country little tilled, we came in sight of Tezintezuntezan, nestling beside the blue lake, a cluster of brown flat roofs amid trees, with two old church towers rising out of the foliage. On a height to the right are the ruins of the palace of King Caltzontzi, now a mere heap of unburnt bricks on the rocks. This royal residence of the King of the Tarascons, before the arrival of the Spaniards, overlooked a lovely domain of lake and hills and sloping fields, and had gathered about it in rude adobe huts a population of fishermen and potters, whose descendants practice the same arts, and have no doubt the same appearance and manners, except as they are modified by the forms of the foreign religion.

The interior of the town does not keep the promise of the exterior for picturesqueness. The streets are broad, but full of rubbish, uneven, and mere lanes between blank adobe walls, with now and then a door opening into a garden or a miserable tenement. We alighted under sycamore-trees in front of the jail and court-house. The jail has two apartments, half-dark rooms, partly excavated out of the hill, a floor of earth, one small grating of wood in front, which serves for door and window, and furnished with a jug of water and a mat or two on the ground for a bed. At this grating two

patient women sat talking with a couple of stupid-looking young men who were locked up for theft. The prisoners seem to depend upon their relations for food. The court-room is a decent apartment, and has hanging on the wall several badly-painted portraits, and a very curious ancient picture, representing the arms of the city of Zinzunzan (as it is here spelled), and contains the portraits of three kings — El Rey Cigauagau, El Rey Sinzicha Tangajuan Bulgo Caltzontzi, and El Rey Characu — in one quarter arms and banners, in the other several heads, three castles, a man in ermine, swords, and crown.

The city has no hotel or place of entertainment, and most of the houses into which we looked are mere adobe sheds, with little furniture. But the place has a school-room, where the education seems to be very primitive. We ate the luncheon we had carried in the best house in the place, in a large room, displaying some taste in decorations, having some specimens of the Uruapan wooden ware and painted plates on the walls. In this house there was one of the red jars manufactured here having an excellent head in high relief on the side, Egyptian in its noble serenity, and yet graceful — the only decoration of so high a type that I saw.

The chief business of the village, except fishing, is the manufacture of pottery. This is carried on entirely in private houses and gardens. The clay is obtained from a hill near the town, and is brought by the men, who also fire the kilns for the baking, and they usually tote it to market. The women do the rest of the work. They knead the clay and mould the pottery, a labor at which their small hands and pliant fingers are exceedingly deft. No wheels are used. All the utensils are made in half-moulds and joined before baking. Seated on the ground, the woman has at her side a heap of clay, and before her a composing-stone. The clay she kneads and rolls and spats in her hands until it is of proper and uniform thickness (and the women are exceedingly skillful at this), and then it is pressed into the moulds. As this ware is very cheap in the distant market, a woman must make a good deal of it in a day to support her family. A house here generally consists of an enclosure in mud walls, perhaps a shabby garden with some fine roses and other flowers, an open adobe hut where the pottery is made and baked, and an equally rude hut where the family sleep on mats spread on the earth. At one of the pottery places was a small chapel to St. Helena, with a bedizened figure of the saint, and hung with votive

offerings. A penitent, a young woman bearing a lighted candle, and attended by an elderly dame, stood in front of the altar. At this house, where we were received with entire courtesy and politeness, though all the eyes of the women, children, and boys followed us with a little suspicion, as if the presence of strangers was unaccountable, I had a curious illustration of the morals of the community. I had in my hand a fine rose, which came from the garden where we lunched, and as an acknowledgment of the courtesy of the house, and when we were saying good-by, I offered it to one of the young girls. She refused it with indignation, or rather took it and cast it angrily on the ground, while all the group looked at us with suspicion. I could not imagine what was wrong, but my Mexican friends explained afterward that it was an insult to offer a flower to a maiden in that way, for the inference was that I had a bad motive.

The Indians of this village are industrious, virtuous, and exceedingly poor, judging poverty by the standard of our wants. The women are short in stature, broad, and sturdy, but with small feet and hands, and much resemble our Northern squaws in features, but they have a mass of thick black hair, which has in it a red glint in the sun. On the shore, where we

went to see the fishermen drawing their nets, and where the view of the blue water and the mountains is very pretty, the women and children all ran away and squatted in the bushes at our approach. The presence of a lady in our party even gave them no confidence.

The present attraction of this village is not the ancient palace of the native king, nor the descendants of his people, who mould the antique pottery and burn candles to St. Helena. It is the romance of the Spanish ecclesiastical dominion. It is finding in this remote Indian village the remains of a splendid hierarchy, which counted no labor too much, no sacrifice too costly, no prodigality of money too free, to secure the salvation and the tribute of the Western world. Tczintczuntczan was the capital of this province and the natural centre for the display of the magnificence of the Church. The name was well known in Spain; the village and its people were favorites with Philip II., who seems to have had an exaggerated notion of its importance. Here arose churches and convents, here learned and saintly devotees of the faith gave their lives to the cause of the cross, and to these poor savages Philip made a gift that any monarch or any city might envy.

When we entered the walled church enclosure we seemed to have stepped back into the

sixteenth century. The scene is more Italian than Spanish in character. This large enclosure, now neglected and run to waste, was once a beautiful garden, cultivated by the monks, who liked, in their exile, to surround themselves with something to remind them of home. There are evidences that it was formally laid out and planted, but the paths are overgrown, and only stray lilies and roses remain to attest the former care. That which most vividly recalls the Spanish missionaries and their taste is the olive-trees that entirely surround the enclosure within the walls. Judging by their appearance, they must have been planted three centuries ago. They are the largest olive-trees I ever saw, and bear unmistakable marks of great age. Most of them are mere ruins of trees, many of them mere shells of bark, but all of them, with the tenacity of the olive, still putting forth verdant sprouts on their decayed summits, and bearing fruit. Twisted, gnarled, fantastic, hollow, with recesses where one may sit, and cleft so that one can pass through the trunk, they yet stand like shapes of vegetation in an artist's dream of Inferno. I doubt if the world can show elsewhere a more interesting group of these historic trees. In the centre of the enclosure some men and boys, in a leisurely and larkish mood, were digging a grave.

A few other graves are there, but no head-stones. Some of the mounds were very fresh, suggesting a sudden access of mortality, in this healthful region; some one remarked that March was probably the time to die, the very aged being shaken off by the rude, persistent winds of the season. A wretched beggar or two followed us. One of them, who was much deformed and had been very clinging, made a specialty of fits. I had already given him something, but it was not enough for his deserts, and when we were about to enter the house for our lunch, he threw himself on a heap of rubbish in the street and went into convulsions, foaming at the mouth. When he saw that nobody paid any attention to him, he got up and went away.

In the enclosure are two ancient churches, one with a tower and bells, the parish church, gaunt and plain, the other the chapel attached to the monastery. Both have an appearance of decay and non-use, the religious accommodations being now in excess of the dwindled population. The monastery, with its outer stairway, gallery, and courts, is a decidedly picturesque old pile, with color subdued but not much faded. The adjoining chapel is large, and above the average of Mexican church interiors in interest, and the cloisters are beau-

tiful. In the centre, walled by a low parapet and open to the sky, is such a garden as one finds in the decaying monasteries of Italy, with orange-trees and a tangle of vines and a cat asleep in the sun. The cloister is of two stories, with round arches, one above the other; the ceiling corners are of wood carved in arabesque, as in Moorish architecture. On the walls are very rude and high-colored paintings, representing the rites of baptism, confirmation, confession, and so forth. It is altogether a bit of the Old World, and one has here an indefinable sense of peace and repose.

The aged priest who has charge of the premises and lives in apartments above the cloisters, the only intelligent man in the village, was unfortunately absent, and we had difficulty in persuading the girl who answered our call from the upper gallery to come down and unlock the sacristy door. In the sacristy is the treasure of Mexico. The room is oblong, and has windows only on one side, towards the west, broad windows, closed with wooden shutters. On the walls are several so-called sacred daubs and a number of uncouth and rubbishy images. But across, and filling one end over the vestment chest, hangs "The Entombment," by Titian. The canvas, which is enclosed in a splendid old carved wooden frame,

is fifteen and a half feet long. It contains eleven figures, all life-size. In the upper left-hand corner is a bit of very Titianesque landscape, exactly like those which Titian was fond of introducing into his pictures, and which his contemporaries attributed to the influence of his birthplace, Pieve di Cadore; on a hill are three crosses in relief, against an orange sky. In the lower left-hand corner is Mary Magdalen seated on the ground, contemplating the nails and crown of thorns. In the lower foreground, very realistically painted, are an ointment box and a basin.

The figure of Christ, supported in a sheet, is being carried to the tomb — a dark cavern in the rear. Two men, holding the sheet, support the head, and one the feet. Aiding also in this tender office is a woman, her head bowed over that of the dead Christ. Behind is St. John, Mary the Virgin, Mary whom Christ loved, and St. Joseph. There are two other figures, partially in shadow at the right, spectators of the solemn scene, and one of them is said to be a portrait of Philip II.

The flesh-painting of the central figure is marvelously fine in imitation of the rigid pallor of death, while that of two of the figures carrying the body is equally true to robust life. The St. John is exquisitely beautiful in draw-

ing and color, conveying the traditional grace and manly tenderness of the beloved disciple. The vestments are in Titian's best manner, the reds and deep blues harmonious and beautiful in tone.

The grouping is masterly, natural, free, and as little academic as such a set scene well can be. Indeed, composition and color both proclaim the picture a great masterpiece. As you study it you have no doubt that it is an original, not a copy. It has the unmistakable stamp of genuineness. The picture, thanks to the atmosphere of this region, is in a perfect state of preservation, the canvas absolutely uninjured.

Is this great picture really a Titian? It seems incredible that a work of this value and importance should be comparatively unknown, and that it should be found in a remote Indian village in Mexico. But the evidence that it is a Titian is strong. It was sent to this church by Philip II., who seems to have thought that no gift was too costly or precious for the cause of the true faith, and who no doubt was deceived by the exaggerated Spanish narratives of the native civilization and taste. Titian, we know, visited at the court of Philip, and executed works to his order. It is possible that this picture is a replica of one somewhere in Europe. I think that any one familiar with the works of

Titian would say that this is in his manner, that in color and composition it is like his best pictures. I trust that this description of it will lead to some investigation abroad that will settle the question.

We stayed in the village several hours, and returned again to look at the picture before we left. The western sun was shining into the broad windows, illuminating the shabby apartment in which it hung. And in this light the figures were more life-like, the color more exquisite, the composition lovelier, than before. We could not but be profoundly impressed. I cannot say how much was due to the contrast of the surroundings, to the surprise at finding such a work of art where it is absolutely lost to the world and unappreciated. I say unappreciated, for I do not suppose there is a human being who ever sees it, except at rare intervals a foreign visitor, who has the least conception of its beauty. And yet these ignorant natives and the priest who guards it are very much attached to it, attributing to its presence here, I think, a supernatural influence. They will not consent to part with it, perhaps would not dare to let it go. A distinguished American artist was willing to pay a very large sum of money for it; the Bishop of Mexico made an effort to get possession of it and carry it to the capital; but all

offers and entreaties have been refused and resisted. How long it will be safe in a decaying building, in the midst of a population that has no conception of its value as a work of art, is matter of conjecture.

We rode home partly on another road, through lanes densely bordered with vegetation and amid plantations under the mountain and by the lake shore. Everywhere are signs of a former ecclesiastical vigor. In the midst of one luxuriant plantation close to the lake we passed a very old church, with a detached campanile of adobe, having a bell, the only access to which was by a ladder. The evening was lovely, and as we climbed the winding, rough, and stony paths to Patzcuaro we had a charming view of the lake and its islands.

Our curiosity had been excited by the curiously decorated wooden ware of Uruapan, and we heard so many contradictory reports about the charms of this village, which is famous for its coffee, that I determined to ride over there. The shortest distance is forty-five miles, but for the sake of better roads we made it fifty. The journey must be on horseback.

It was St. Patrick's Day in the morning as we rode through the arch out of the court-yard of the inn. The morning-star was a diamond point in the rosy dawn. The mozo led the

way, a sword strapped to his saddle, a pannier containing bread, cold chicken, and cheese, while the necks of a couple of bottles of wine peeped out of the basket. The wine was in case of sickness. The sword was for war. Mr. Pablo Plata, Mexican gentleman, wore leather leggings, a linen coat, and a serape over his shoulders. The white horse of the writer was a fast walker, with an easy gait, single foot or canter, and entirely bridle-wise, guided by a touch of the rein on the neck or by the pressure of the knees. The Mexican horses are small, but they have endurance, and are generally agreeable under the saddle.

The soft bells were ringing for matins as we rattled over the stone pavement, came out into the country lanes, and left the town in its repose. The air was deliciously fresh; birds sang in the hedgerows; there was the exhilaration of spring, of young love; every sense was delighted. A mile beyond the town, at the parting of the paths, and in the point of a hill, we passed a cave. It used to be a lurking-place for bandits: only two years before, robbery and murder had been done there. The sun touched the mountain-tops as we passed the grewsome place. In an hour the lake was in sight; in two hours we had descended into and crossed the plains at the foot of the lake, and passed

through a couple of Indian villages; at the end of three hours, after a considerable ascent, the lake was still in view, a lovely object in its mountain setting, the end of a vista of fertile slopes and luxuriant valley. The day was lovely, but at nine o'clock the wind began to blow.

Coming up the mountain through a noble growth of pines, and reaching the crest, suddenly a grand prospect burst upon us — double rows of mountains on the Pacific coast, and miles and miles below, down the mountain, a vast valley, away off in the *tierra caliente*, swooning in a dense atmosphere. The sky was very clear, but the mountains were hazy blue, and the valley stretching into purple distance slept in the sun. The country was for the most part untilled, and the inhabitants were few; trains of pack-mules were met carrying sacks of sugar and bales of cotton, occasionally a gypsy-like encampment by the road-side was seen, and we passed two collections of huts called ranches, and a pueblo of Indians of the Tarascon tribe. Leaving on our right the village of Tingambato, its church tower conspicuous in the trees, we went down, down the mountain over an intolerable stony path, and came at noon to Ziracuaritiro, a warm village hidden in plantations of bananas, oranges, and all sorts of fruits of barbarous names and in-

sipid taste, cane fields, irrigated, and general tropical luxuriance of vegetation. The village had a sort of centre, with a rude plaza and a primitive church; but it is mainly a town of lanes, gardens, and small plantations, in the midst of which the inhabitants live in thatched huts of adobe or cane, semi-African in appearance.

We turned into a garden to eat our luncheon. I call it a garden; it was merely a tangle of shrubbery, without flowers, and with few fruit trees and no grass. In the enclosure was an adobe hut, only half roofed, that served as a kitchen, another small adobe hut where the family slept on mats on the ground, and an open-work hut of cane, with a rude bedstead — a couple of boards laid on trestles — for all furniture, the residence of a married daughter. The visible family was the mother, a woman evidently of good sense and sterling character, a well-grown lad, asleep in the middle of the day on a mat, a couple of young girls, the young married daughter, aged twenty-five, who had, nevertheless, a daughter aged thirteen, and a friend of the family, a rather pretty woman, of modest demeanor, who had married an old man, and lived in a neighboring thicket. These people were wretchedly poor, but exceedingly civil and friendly. They set out a table

for us in the shade, but, except some cooking utensils of pottery and a few coarse plates, table furniture they had none, not even knives and forks. Fruit they could not furnish. During our siesta, while the horses were resting — the Mexican horses are allowed no food on a journey from morning till night — I made the acquaintance of this amiable family. They all had the curiosity of children, and were never tired of looking at my watch, compass, ring, and the antique coins attached to the watch chain. What interested them chiefly, however, was the cost of everything. The prices invariably brought from these feminine lips the softest profane exclamations of surprise. They all had low-pitched, sweet voices. The sole reply of the married daughter to any question was "Señor," in a rising or falling inflection, never "Si, señor," or "No, señor." When it was time to go, the simple souls were as reluctant to have us depart as if we had been life-long friends. The comely lad, who acted as our guide on the way to show us some of the finest fruit plantations, of pines, oranges, and bananas, was very reluctant to accept the two-real piece of silver I forced into his hand. Evidently a kindly, gentle-natured people.

Our way for miles lay through hot lanes and cane fields, with everywhere the sound of run-

ning water. At the foot-hills we stopped to see a large sugar hacienda, a characteristic establishment, half civilized, half barbarous; a mingling of mill, office, kitchens, terrace, yard, store, store-houses, lodging-rooms, dogs, mules, parrots, and mongrel men and women. And then up, up the mountain, through open pine forests, with occasionally trees of giant size, and from the ridges glorious views under the trees of great mountains and the extensive hot country, with its towns and green plantations. At length, after a long pull, we reined up on the summit, on the edge of a precipice overlooking the great plain of Uruapan. The view was a surprise. Below was the valley, five or six miles broad, plentifully irrigated, green with maize, barley, cane; at its further side, in the foot-hills, the city of Uruapan, shining in the rays of the withdrawing sun; below it, in the luxuriant plain, two lakes like mirrors; and beyond, noble mountain-peaks, stretching away to the Pacific, enclosing high valleys smoking with charcoal burning. All this lovely panorama projected on a background of pink sunset.

After we had picked our way down a precipitous path, and passed the large hacienda of St. Catherine, encountering droves of mules and cattle on the dusty roads, we entered the very

broad and straight street, cut all the way longitudinally by deep ruts, that leads to the town. The way was terribly long to us and to our somewhat jaded beasts, and it seemed as if we never should reach the town. It was seven o'clock and dark when we came to the first houses, and then we had a long ride over the paved hilly streets, between blank walls of houses, houses with window-shutters and no glass, to the hotel St. Antonio. We had been warmly recommended to this as an excellent hotel, and tired, dusty, and hungry as we were, we rode into the court-yard with great expectations. It was a miserable fonda of one story about a shabby court. No one appeared to welcome us. After calling and waiting some time, a *nonchalant* boy, who represented the indifference of the establishment, appeared, and said we could have rooms. In the course of ten minutes more of shuffling about he showed us an apartment, and by means of a tallow candle, which he procured after another long absence, we saw that it was a barrack of a room, containing two cot beds, a wooden horse for the saddles, and a rickety wash-stand. The window had no glass, and the shutter was tightly closed. I asked for a separate room — a request which the boy did not even take into consideration — and when he had brought a

pitcher of water he seemed to think his whole duty was discharged, for when we asked about supper he went away without any reply whatever, and we saw him no more. I wandered out into the court to the family apartments. A woman with a lot of children about her was seated on the ground; she made a surly reply to my salutation, evidently regarded me with suspicion, and to my inquiry about supper deigned no answer. It was a real Spanish fonda reception. In the mean time the mozo had discovered that there was no food for the horses; and as they were ready at the door, we left the candle burning in the stately apartment, and no man or woman opposing, mounted our tired horses, and rode away in the moonlight to another fonda on the plaza. The situation of this was better, the fonda worse if anything than the other, except that it had a kitchen, kept by a couple of old women, and financially distinct from the hotel. The court was sunken, an untidy place, having a few tattered banana plants, where mules were tied at night. Our mozo looked after the horses, having to go out and buy food for them, and the proprietor contented himself with showing us a room, the only one not occupied. It had two beds and a tightly barred window. As my comrade objected to opening even a crack to

let in the deadly night air, I had a headache in the morning. It seemed to me that a hot bath, after such a long weary ride, would be refreshing, but my proposal was met with an exclamation of horror. Almost on his knees Mr. Plata begged me not to think of such a suicidal performance. Fortunately for his views, it turned out that there was no public bath in this city of nine thousand inhabitants. The next day, when I searched the town for one, the women in charge of an establishment to which I was sent said that if I would order one they would prepare it for next day.

The demesne of the old women consisted of a small room with a couple of rude tables, without table-cloths, and benches, and a smaller kitchen. The earthen vessels for cooking hung on the walls, and all the centre was occupied by a stone range having several little holes for charcoal fires. These women were exceedingly good-natured, promised a supper in time, and sent off their slatternly serving-maid to buy beer and bread. While the meal was in preparation, I went out to see the town.

The night scene was lively. The town has a double plaza, each surrounded by arcaded dwellings and shops, all more or less shabby, but appearing well in the moonlight. The shops were open; half the town seemed to be

getting its frugal supper in the open air, and the place was quite illuminated by the flaring torches of the dealers, who squatted on the ground, and offered their fragrant but uninviting cooking to the hungry. Beyond the plaza is a very pretty paseo, a lovely promenade, well-kept walks among the trees and beds of bloom, an enchanting place in the moonlight, with the plash of the fountain and the odor of night-blooming flowers. Fronting it is the chief church of the place, a very good specimen of Spanish architecture. The town itself, I found next morning, is an out-at-the-elbow sort of place, but I know few others anywhere that have a prettier little paseo. It was nearly nine o'clock before our supper was ready — a nondescript meal, and I suppose not bad for those who like the ordinary Mexican cooking.

We waited in the morning an hour for a cup of coffee. The traveler in Mexico has to learn that he must order his coffee the night before. Its preparation is a slow process. The berry, burned black, is ground to a fine powder, and water is let to drip through it drop by drop. The liquid, real essence of coffee, is black as ink, and a tablespoonful suffices in a cup of hot milk. As commonly made it is too much burned and bitter. But the Mexican coffee, when the berry is properly cured, and not let

to acquire an earthy flavor by drying on the ground, is, I think, as good as any in the world. This raised in Uruapan is equal to the better-known Colima, the selected small round berries resembling Mocha in appearance and flavor.

I had made the acquaintance the night before of a drifting American named Santiago, one of the adventurers who give the Mexicans their idea of the people of the United States. Born on our frontier, he had never seen a city nor much of civilized life, but had been cowboy, Texan rover, and associate of the lawless, and gravitating to Mexico and picking up the language, had acted as interpreter for cattle buyers and railway surveyors. He was now selling sewing-machines on the installment plan in Michoacan. The business ought to be good, for a machine costing fourteen dollars in the United States sells for seventy-five in Mexico. Santiago's business was to sell the machines, teach the women how to use them, and then collect the seven dollars a month installments. Often the machines revert, after the payment of a couple of installments, and they are often also taken out of pawn by the agent and sold over again. Santiago had another still more interesting business. This is the selling of enlarged and colored photograph likenesses.

Finding a photograph, taken by a strolling photographer, he persuades the owner to have it enlarged. Santiago sends this to a firm in a remote town in New York, with a description of the subject, complexion, color of hair, and eyes. This is thrown up to life size, properly colored, and returned. The noble picture costs Santiago about twenty dollars delivered, and he sells it for forty. Thus the fine arts are slowly sifting into Mexico.

We explored the town that morning in search of good specimens of the Uruapan lacquered ware. It is famous the world over; it has taken the prize of gold medals at Paris, Vienna, Philadelphia. As usually happens in like cases, it was impossible to find good specimens in the town where the article is made. We visited the family whose work has taken the prizes, but it had no finished work; indeed the artist whose work won the gold medals had recently died. The ware of other makers was decidedly inferior, and I found nowhere, in shops or private houses, specimens of the best. The work is either gourds or shallow dishes of wood cut out with a jack-knife, brilliantly decorated in colors. In the genuine ware a ground-color is first put on, gold or olive, or some low tone; on this the drawings, usually of flowers, are made; the figures are

then cut out deeply with a knife, something as in wood-engraving, and the intaglio is filled with paint, each color being laid in separately and left to dry thoroughly before another is added. As there are as many colors as may be in a bouquet of various flowers, the process is slow. When the paint is perfectly dry, the whole surface is rubbed with a paste made of tree-caterpillars. This gives an enduring lacquer to the surface that resists grease and hot water. The ware therefore retains its brilliant color and beauty, no matter how hard the usage, till it is literally worn out. The market value of this worm paste is two dollars a pound. As the finest ware is only made by one family, a small amount is produced, and the price is high. The drawings in this family are all done by a stupid-looking girl of sixteen, and her designs are all mechanically copied. The former draughtsman always drew his flowers from nature.

While waiting for breakfast I visited the old church on the paseo. The most notable thing about it is a fine flower-garden, occupying all the ground at one side. Within I found the usual bare white walls, but a highly decorated and gilded chancel and altar, a wood floor, a ceiling of wood carved and painted in lozenge patterns, and cornices prettily painted in blue

and brown. A row of men on their hands and knees were scrubbing the floor with soap and water, using the painted wooden bowls, and groups of women were kneeling about the confessionals, either confessing or waiting for the priests.

In the garden I was accosted by a very respectable man, who offered to show me the town. He was, I afterward learned, one of the first citizens of the place, a planter, dealer in iron, and a man of means. Uruapan, lying in the foot-hills, is splendidly watered, a noble though artificial stream (at least with artificial banks) rushing through the suburbs, and pouring abundant life into the blooming valley. Indeed, it is the water of Uruapan that makes it widely famous as a garden of delight. We went down to the river, and followed it where it is diverted into several channels through the coffee plantations. Here, in the dense shade of bananas and other fruit trees, gleamed the red berries, and here were the African huts embowered in the luxuriant foliage. In these cool retreats life was simple, men, women, and children were bathing in the canal, regardless of a censorious world.

We found also on our walk a thriving cotton-mill, conducted by a Scotchman, employing some two hundred operatives, and turning out

common sheeting, which sells here for a much higher price than fine cotton cloth in the States; the cotton costs the manufacturer much more than he would have to pay for a much better quality in New Orleans. I understood him to say that the Mexican cotton was generally inferior to ours.

My very civil and obliging guide invited me to his house — a substantial residence, half dwelling-house and half shop, the court bright with flowers and decorated with specimens of the Uruapan lacquered ware — and introduced me to his family. I was informed that the house and all it contained was mine. It was a very warm day, and after our long stroll one of the cooling Mexican drinks, say an orange sherbet, would have been enjoyable. But my hospitable entertainer did not offer me even a glass of water.

Santiago was a character. I do not know what his Mexican speech was, but his American was the most curious mosaic of slang and profanity I ever heard. He informed me, as we sat that evening in the paseo listening to the music in the lighted and thronged church — it being the eve of St. Joseph's Day — that he was on that sort of thing himself: he had just been baptized. His reasons for this step, since he had no respect for the priests and no

knowledge of the Catholic religion, were not clear; but as he had been ill recently, for the first time in his life, and likely to die, I suppose he thought he might as well take all the chances. The ceremony had not changed his conversation or his mode of life, which he freely opened to me, but he appeared to think there might be safety in it. "The priest told me," Santiago rambled on, "that if I would be baptized I would be just as if I had been born over; all that I had done would be clean rubbed out. He gave me a lot of Spanish to learn, catechism and all that; but I could n't do it, and I just told him that I could n't get on to all that Bible racket. Never mind, he said, if I only believed so and so [it was the substance of the Apostles' Creed that was required], and I told him I reckoned I did. When I was going to be baptized I said, 'Look a-here, I can't go this confession business; I don't want to tell you all the mean things I 've done — and I 've done some mighty mean things — or all the mean things I 'm going to do.' He said I could make it general; I 'd already owned up I was a big sinner; if I was baptized, all that would be taken away. Then I happened to think, and I said, 'There is one little thing that is on my mind: there 's a Jew dealer up here in Zamora that I owe seven dollars and a half for clothes.'

I guess I was cheated, but I felt kind of uneasy about it when I was sick. And the priest said, 'That don't count; when you are baptized you are a new man, just as if you had been born again, and you don't owe that Jew any seven dollars and a half.' That is what the priest said. I don't know anything about it."

Notwithstanding his varied life, Santiago had the cow-boy's notion of "square dealing," and I found that he had a reputation among the merchants of the town for business integrity. It was this, in his opinion, that distinguished him from the Mexican community. Nor did this borderer altogether lack sentiment. "The place of all the world I'd like to see," he said, as we looked at the moonlight through the lace-like foliage, "is Italy. I've just been reading 'The Last Days of Pompey.' I'd like to go to Italy."

The next morning we were to start surely at five o'clock, in order to pass the hot plain before the sun beat down on it, and to be well on our fifty-mile ride in the cool of the day. Mr. Pablo Plata insisted on that, and arrangements were made accordingly. When I awoke it was half past six, the mozo had the horses saddled, but Mr. Plata was still asleep, and there was no sign of coffee. When Mr. Plata was aroused he said that he would start at once, but while I

was getting my coffee, he and the mozo, San Francisco, would step across the plaza to mass. It was St. Joseph's Day, and it would be very unlucky, indeed dangerous, to those on the journey without mass.

The morning was fresh, a breeze stirred the trees in the plaza, birds were singing; women had set up their coffee and bread stands for those early astir, women with ribosas over their heads were going to mass, servants were sauntering to market to buy a few centavos' worth of milk, meat, and vegetables. At the fonda the horses and mules were being saddled. In the court-yard, out of their close apartments, appeared muleteers, drummers, a party of sleepy Mexican ladies who had taken refuge there the night before, and a big Indian in Mexican costume, heavy-faced, surly, but looked up to with immense respect as the richest man in all that region. It was nearly an hour before my comrades returned from mass, and eight o'clock when we clattered over the rough pavements out of town.

We returned by the way we came, a route much traveled by horsemen, and long trains of burros and mules, each with two big packs of sugar or cotton. The only vehicle seen was the creaking cart, the heavy wheels of which were solid, constructed of three pieces of wood

wedged together, the axle turning with the wheels. As the mozo had neglected to put up a lunch, we breakfasted with our friends at Ziracuaritiro. The whole of the hospitable family assisted in preparing this meal, scraping the cheese, mashing the corn, and stirring the tomato and other ingredients, and I very unwisely witnessed the operations. But the result was a capital breakfast. When it was over, the mother asked me to change the two-real piece of money I had given her son, as she thought it was too smooth to pass readily. A touch of thrift makes all the world kin.

At sundown we rode into the streets of Patzcuaro, thanks to the easy gait of our horses, very little fatigued by the ride.

Here, as well as anywhere else, these random notes on Mexico might as well end. It is a country with a marvelous climate, extraordinary natural beauty, full of novelty and interest to the traveler. It is a land of much politeness, amiability, and graciousness of manner. Its civilization has many points worthy of imitation. Its government, however, is, as I said, the most purely personal of any with which I am acquainted, and offers, as at present conducted, the least invitation to foreign capital or enterprise. And if any one desires to see the depressing outcome of miscegenation, he will do well to travel through it.

THE GOLDEN HESPERIDES.

THE GOLDEN HESPERIDES.

It has been a subject of regret ever since that I did not buy Southern California when I was there in March, 1877, and sell it out the same month. I should have made enough to pay my railway fare back, and purchase provisions to last through the deserts of sand and feeding places, and had money left to negotiate for one of the little states on the Atlantic coast, and settle down in such plain living and civilization as it might afford. It was all offered to me, but I hesitated, and before the end of the month it was beyond my reach. There is not much of it, little more than what you may call a strip of irrigated sand between the Mohave Desert and the Pacific Ocean; and if you do not secure a portion of it now, it will be forever beyond your means. For there is but one California in the world (one ought to know this, after hearing it a hundred times a day), and everybody "has got to have" some of it. There is nowhere else to go in the winter. Travelers who have been in Southern Italy, in North Africa, in Sicily, in

Florida, in Greece, in Madeira, in Jamaica, in Bogota, in the Piney Woods, are perfectly open in telling you this. There is no climate like it. But it is rapidly going into the hands of investors, climate and all. If the present expectations of transferring half-frozen Eastern and Northern people there by the railway companies and land-owners are half realized, Southern California, in its whole extent, will soon present the appearance of a mass-meeting, each individual fighting for a lot and for his perpendicular section of climate. In a year, perhaps in six months from now, you might as well attempt to buy a plot in London city, near the Bank, on which to set out an orange grove and some pepper-trees, as to get a foothold in the Garden of the World. I am not an alarmist, but I have seen London, and I know what its climate is in winter. It is sufficient to hint to prudent folks that there are many people in the world, that there is but one California, and that there is not room enough in it for all. Somebody is going to be left out.

There is nothing that will grow anywhere in the world — except, perhaps, certain great staples — that will not grow there in greater abundance and perfection: oranges, lemons, limes, peaches, nectarines, grapes, figs, almonds, olives, Madeira nuts, every edible vegetable

known to woman, — perhaps even grass might be raised by constant and excessive irrigation. Happening one night into a Pullman smoking-room, after days of travel through the Sahara wastes of New Mexico and Arizona, I chanced to hear fragments of a conversation between a man familiar with the region and a new-comer, who was evidently a little discouraged by the endless panorama of sand and dry sagebrush.

"Anything grow along here?"

"Everything, sir, everything; the most productive soil on God Almighty's earth. All it wants is water."

"Fruits?"

"Fruits? I should say so. Every sort that 's known. This country right here is going to beat the world in fruits."

"Melons?"

"Well, yes;" relapsing into candor and confession, "no; the fact is, melons don't do so well here. They ain't apt to be good. The vines grow so fast that the melons are bumped along over the ground and bruised."

"Ah?" without any sign of surprise.

"Yes," without a smile, and with evident desire to keep back no part of the truth, even if it were an afterthought; "if you want to pick a melon in this country, you have to get on horseback."

And then the conversation expanded into what seemed to me a little exaggeration of the "boom" in New Mexico. There is a buoyancy in the air. The traveler who has been dragged through the sordidness, the endless materialism of flat, muddy, or dusty land, and shanty-towns, as seen from the railway, of Kansas and Nebraska, experiences a certain elevation of spirits on coming to the high, barren vastness of New Mexico, mostly treeless and verdureless; a sort of clean, wind-swept top of the world, free and out-doors, illimitable. The air is like wine. It is a luxury to breathe it. The American lungs expand, the pulse quickens; it is necessary to breathe twice as fast as in the East, to get oxygen enough to satisfy one. One's whole nature expands. The imagination is kindled. The tongue is loosened. Here is freedom, the real elixir. You see at once that it was a mistake ever to expect a good climate with trees and a lush, green vegetation, requiring and giving dampness. The mind is enfranchised. The dweller desires to speak the truth, the whole truth, to give free play to it. Truth becomes buoyant, expansive, hyperbolical. It knows no limit of time or space. The difference between conversation in the East and in the West is that in the latter it is pitched an

octave higher. Vast spaces, limitless horizons, thin air, clear skies, beget a certain largeness of speech. The new-comer, in my experience, is more subject to it than the old resident, especially if he has invested in a bit of land, which he may or may not want to sell. Human nature is the same everywhere, under varying conditions. Women who talk of the fashions and of education in the East speak about real estate in the Far West.

The two pieces of advice that were given me on starting for California were that I must wear always there the thickest flannels and the heaviest winter suit, and that I must ask no questions about anybody's marital relations. The first was good. The second was a humorously malicious allusion to the notion that divorces are as common there as in Chicago and Connecticut. It was repeatedly impressed upon me that the California climate, the best in the world, was something that one must get used to.

From the heights of New Mexico to the Pacific it is a land of strange and confusing contrasts, upsetting all one's preconceived notions of how Nature ought to act. At Las Vegas Hot Springs, at an elevation of about seven thousand feet, in a barren valley inclosed by stony brown hills, in March, there was no sign of spring except here and there a

purple wild flower in the sand, and yet it somehow looked like summer. The sky was turquoise blue, the sun rays were warm, the air splendid in quality, elastic and inspiring. From the appearance, I should have had no doubt that it was summer,— a summer without vegetation, — if I had not discovered a snow bank under my north window. It was difficult to conceive that one needed an overcoat, or might not lounge in the easy-chairs on the broad verandas, unless one happened to observe that at ten A. M. the thermometer had risen from the freezing point of sunrise to only 38°. It was so dry. Everything and everybody was electrified. The hotel, sumptuously furnished, heated by steam and lighted throughout by electricity, was a sort of big dynamo. We could not touch a bit of iron, turn on a light, brush against a portière, or shake hands without experiencing a tingling shock. Inside and out, it was like being in a place enchanted. It was much the same at Santa Fé, — cold, clear, looking like summer, water freezing in the pitcher at night, sky blue by day, purple at sunset, the air so tenuous that Old Bald, a snow-peak twelve thousand feet high, seemed close at hand; and I noticed that the moon was thin and had no body, merely a disk of silver-paper stuck on the distant sky.

But it is seldom cold in the Needles and the Mohave Desert, — a shimmering alkaline waste: 85° in March, and say 120° to 130° in July. It does not matter. The few people in the far-apart stations live in houses that have a second detached roof, put on like the fly of a tent; and the heated, desolate passage is a providential arrangement to lower the spirits of the traveler to the enjoyment of the irrigated country recovered from the desert, in Southern California. It is a veritable paradise, as really such as the oasis of Fayoum in Egypt. Heavens! how the human eye does crave the green color; how grateful it is for a field of barley, a straight eucalyptus-tree, vines and roses clambering over the houses, the lustrous foliage of the orange groves starred with globes of gold! This is Paradise. And the climate? Perpetual summer (but daily rising in price). There is no doubt of this when you reach the San Gabriel valley, Passadena and Los Angeles. Avenues of eucalyptus, pepper, and orange-trees, two, three, four rows of them, seven and eight miles long; vast plowed fields of oranges; the vine stubs in the grape plantations beginning to bud; barley fodder (the substitute for hay) well up and verdant; palmettos and other semi-tropical plants, and all the flowers, and shrubs, and vines, gay, rampant, vigorous,

ever-blooming, in door-yards, gardens, overrunning trees and houses, — surely it is summer. There is snow sprinkled on the bare, ashy hills, but everywhere in the plain is water, from the unfailing mountain springs, running in wooden conduits and ditches. You can buy this water at so much an hour. All you need to buy is climate and water, — the land is thrown in. It is warm in the sun, — the thermometer may indicate 70°; it is even hot, walking out through the endless orange plantations and gardens that surround Los Angeles; but there is a chill the instant you pass into the shade; you still need your winter clothing, and if you drive, or ride in the grip-cars over the steep hills, you require a winter overcoat. The night temperature throughout California is invariably in great contrast to that in the daytime; nearly everywhere fire is necessary at night the year round, and agreeable nearly all the year, even in Southern California. I doubt if it is ever pleasant to sit out-of-doors or on the piazzas at night, though it may be in the hotter months, in the Southern portion. But it is very confusing to the mind of the new-comer to reconcile his necessity for winter clothing to what he sees and almost feels; in short, to get used to the climate. The invalid is thrown off his guard by appearances; and I should say

that there is no country in the world where a person needs to use more care about taking cold. Yet this must be said: the air is bracing and life-giving. I did not, in any part of the State, in walking or taking any sort of exercise, feel the least fatigue. A "cold," therefore, for a person in ordinary health and condition, is not the dragging, nearly mortal experience that it is apt to be in the East. Then the crowning advantage of the country, even if the climate is treacherous and needs watching in its effects, is that one can be out-of-doors all the time, nearly every day in the year. Meantime he can eat oranges, if he is not particular about the variety, and get rich selling prospective or real orange groves to Eastern people. But he will never get over the surprises and contrasts of the country. We went one day, by rail, eighteen miles over the gentle hills, from Los Angeles to its lovely seaport of Santa Monica. Fine hotel, charming beach and sand bluffs, illimitable Pacific Ocean. It was not a warm day nor a cold day, just the ordinary kind of day to sell (I suppose one could buy a day's climate there, or half a day's, or swap off a morning for an afternoon with the real-estate brokers, — and every man and woman *is* a real-estate broker), but we wore thick winter clothing, and carried overcoats,

which occasionally were needed. Yet as many as seventy-five sane people were bathing in the Pacific Ocean as if it had been August! Flowers, fruits, summer bathing, and winter overcoats,—you have to get used to it.

It is a splendid place for invalids. The country was full of them. It will be fuller yet, if Los Angeles, lovely city of angels, growing like asparagus in a hot-bed, already with fifty thousand people, and may be ten thousand more, in the season, trying to find a night's lodging, never yet having had the least time to pay attention to ordinary sanitary precautions, does not speedily design some system of drainage out of its shut-in valley. But this is a matter of detail. And yet it cannot be neglected, for already the doctors there have cases of pneumonia, diphtheria, and typhoid fever. San Diego, lying mostly on sand hills overlooking its magnificent harbor, has already appropriated a million and a quarter of dollars for drainage, inviting the Waring system. And another thing, also a matter of taste as well as of detail: the buyer, driving around the city and the country, which for thirty miles in any direction is humming with the noise of building, and planting, and laying out streets, — the hum of populations yet to be, — the buyer, amid the myriad signs of "Real Estate For

Sale," ought not to be confronted by so many legends of "Undertakers and Embalmers." It chills ardor. Real estate for certain limited purposes, though unlimited occupation, we are all reluctant to purchase.

One of the great uses of New England in the world is that of an object lesson, for the devotees of the development hypothesis, of the survival of the fittest. Southern California offers to illustrate the converse. The movement of people thither is, both in quality and volume, the most striking phenomenon of modern times, in its character a migration perhaps unprecedented in history. It quite equals the movement of 1849, perhaps surpasses it in speculative excitement, but its original motion is entirely different. There was mixed, in the hegira of 1849 to the west coast, a greed for sudden wealth and a spirit of reckless adventure, which recalled the romantic heroism of both Jason and Cortez. The present emigration is not for adventure at all, and primarily not for gold ; it is a pursuit of climate. But naturally, this human desire for dwelling in a place genial and tolerant of human physical weakness has been taken advantage of, and the west coast is the arena of the most gigantic speculation and inflation known in American annals. I cannot conceive that the excitement

of '49 exceeded this. We can well understand why men and women, who discover that they have but one life to live on this engaging planet, that they are freer than plants to change their habitat, and that all the places in the world are not alike inhospitable and not alike devoted to the development of the robust virtues, should weary of the winters of the North, and of the blizzards and cyclones of the West, and seek a land comparatively free from physical anxiety. In the process of natural selection there has been developed a great number of people who come to regard climate as of more importance than anything else. When to this desire is added the advertised advantage of living in luxury with comparatively little labor, the migration is accounted for. The fact is, besides, that we are a poetic people; notwithstanding the sternness of our discipline, we have a good deal of Oriental imagination, and if you dangle a golden orange before the eyes of a Northern man you can lead him anywhere.

The Southern California speculator has a reasonable, not to say a mathematical, basis. You can figure out of our sixty millions of population a certain number of invalids and their families, or of people not exactly invalids, to whom a genial climate seems the most desir-

able thing, a number large enough to fill up Southern California several times over. What interests the traveler is the inquiry, What will all those people now there, and on the way there, do when they have sold out all the land to each other, and resold and resold it at constantly mounting prices, until it is beyond purchase, and it is found that no possible crop on it can pay a remunerative per cent. on the irrigated principle? What interests the philosopher is the inquiry, What sort of a community will ultimately result from this union of the Invalid and the Speculator? Assuming that Southern California is the best winter climate in the republic, and that its product is mainly small fruits, given a land as valuable as Wall Street, is it not the expectation that this shall be the home of the rich, who must draw upon Eastern accumulations of capital? Agriculture is now the dependence there of labor, for at present coal is so high as to forbid profitable manufacturing. How are the laboring people to live? I was told, in a certain region, that there were at least a thousand dressmakers and milliners, who had gone there expecting to live by their trades, who found the ground completely occupied, and were filling the positions of chambermaids and other servants, glad to get any sort of work by which they could

live. Many a man, who went there with a little money, expecting to enrich himself by speculation, or to own that gold mine, an orange grove, has had his lesson, and is glad to earn the means of subsistence by grooming or driving horses. It begins to be said with frequency, "This is no place for a poor man."

If it is true that the quantity of land open to purchase is very limited, as the intending buyer is constantly told, and limited because of the difficulty of irrigating the adjacent desert, there is also at present an artificial limitation on account of the ownership of vast tracts, ranches of from twenty thousand to one hundred thousand acres, by investors and speculators and railway corporations. California — one hears that already — is practically in the hands of a few rich men. It is not literally true, but vast land-ownership is certainly a feature of this Eldorado.

There is an undeniable fascination about the west coast for most persons. Probably the temporary sojourner, however much he may be pleased with certain qualities of the climate, and however deeply he may be interested in the abnormal state of things, declares, if he is in health, that nothing would induce him to live there. Possibly a majority of those who go there think they go temporarily, for the

winter, or to make easily a little money. It is a common experience, throughout the State, to dislike the life, the society, the whole thing, at first, and then to become as violently attached to it as a place of residence. Something is apt to draw people back who have been there once: perhaps the climate, or the untrammeled life, or a certain expensiveness congenial to the American mind.

I do not know whether the English language is exactly adapted to Southern California. It seems to me too tame and literal to express the exuberant growth of that region. At any rate, the real-estate people call in the aid of art and music. Brass bands, heading the processions to auction sales of city lots in the outlying deserts, excite the buyer to frenzy; and seductive paintings, a vast broadside of boards erected at the railway stations, — pictures of vineyards, orchards, lofty rose-covered houses and delectable hills, — appeal to the most stolid visitor. Indeed, our language is too poor to do justice to the prolific powers of nature, to say nothing of the prolific invention of man. Jack's Beanstalk is not a myth, but simply an illustration. We are accustomed to regard the tree as a slow, laborious product of nature. I do not say that in California the forest tree is an annual, but if you plant eucalyptus saplings you

will have in three or four years a fine, stately grove, from which firewood is cut; and very good firewood this fat tree makes. I was shown a big stump of a eucalyptus-tree in a Los Angeles garden, which the owner had cut down because it was too near the house. It was ninety feet high, and he had planted the sapling only seven years before.

Possibly Southern California should be described as a garden rather than an agricultural region. The most considerable plantations I saw were of vineyards and orange groves. The vineyards were on flat, irrigated land, vineyards sometimes six hundred acres in extent. There is no doubt that the yield of grapes is prolific. There is also no doubt that nearly every kind of wine known to the market is made from the same field, — hock, claret, burgundy, champagne; wine sweet as cordials and sour as vinegar; wines white, red, and golden. Quantity is the thing aimed at. Good wine is produced here and there. I did not happen upon any in the hotels or vineyards of Southern California, but I tasted of a good bottle in San Francisco. I question if choice, fine wines will ever be produced on the rich flats; certainly not by the present wholesale system of cultivation, — getting the most possible from the acre. It is probable that the best wine

grapes will be grown in the foot-hills, where the producer, for the sake of quality, will be content with a yield of a quarter of the present quantity per acre. I doubt not that if a man were to limit his vineyard to fifty acres, which he could properly cultivate, and the product of which he could properly take care of, he would get a much better result as to quality of wine than he gets from two hundred acres, and that his profit would be greater. The science of wine growing and handling is still little regarded. The effort is to obtain the greatest quantity of juice, and the manipulation and manufacture of sorts from the same juice is, I was told, becoming common, though perhaps not yet as universal as in France, where we get now almost no wine in the bottle answering to the name on the label.

The orange-tree is very prolific in Southern California. I do not know why the best varieties would not grow there. There is, of course, as much difference between oranges as between apples. The attractive golden outside is a constant deception, the cover of an unpleasant surprise. I found at Las Vegas a delicious orange, not very large, fine skin, firm, lively pulp, melting in the mouth, with little remaining fibre; sweet, but not with the insipid sweetness of so many of the Havana oranges, —

very like the Malta oranges. It came from Hermasilla, in Mexico. I searched diligently in California, but I did not find in any hotel, market, chance peddler's basket, or grove any orange to compare with this. Nearly all of them were sharply acrid. There is a kind called the Navel, much praised. But it was sour, wherever I came across it. Oranges were in great abundance. Perhaps I was unfortunate in not finding any in perfection. But I ate those which were praised, and the variety which I was informed had taken the premium in competition with those of Florida. All had the same sourness; and I concluded that the grafts must have come from Sicily or Southern Italy, where a really sweet, luscious orange is rare. I know that this is a matter of taste; that Californians ate their own oranges and said they liked them, and seemed hurt when I sometimes asked for a lemon, to "take the taste out." I hope the experiment will be made with other varieties, for I desire to believe that California can produce the best oranges in the world.

In some fruits California certainly excels. The small olives have the nutty sweetness of those grown in Southern France; and I ate raisins, made from grapes grown in a little valley back of San Diego, which were, in my ex-

perience with this wholesome article of food, incomparably fine. With more careful cultivation and attention to best varieties, I see no reason why this region cannot supply the rest of the United States with abundance of small fruits and nuts which will be preferred to those now imported.

The success of this gardening and fruit-raising, however, must depend largely upon the price the cultivator finally pays for his land, for the competition will be with countries where land is cheap and wages are low. It would not pay to raise pears in Wall Street. I do not mean to say that the small industries of husbandry are neglected; irrigation and planting keep pretty even pace with surveying, auctioneering, and building. But at present the leading industry is the selling of real estate, — it is about the only thing talked of. In the six months previous to March, 1887, the price of real estate in the region of Los Angeles and Passadena had advanced four hundred per cent. A lady went out one morning by rail from Los Angeles to Passadena, where she took carriage for the ordinary drive round the country, through Baldwin's thirty-thousand-acre ranch. As she was starting an agent asked her if she did not want to buy a lot, — they peddle lots like oranges; he could offer her a bargain of a

small building lot for fifty dollars. The lady said she did n't mind making a little investment (the air is so stimulating, the orange blossoms are so intoxicating, there is such a noise of building and hammering everywhere, and there are so many invalids from Maine and New Hampshire, sitting in the rose-covered porches of their little cottages), and she took the lot and paid for it. On her return in the afternoon, the same agent met her, and asked her if she did not want to sell her lot. She replied that she was perfectly willing to sell at a fair price — her drive had been rather dusty, and she had seen a good deal of apparently unoccupied ground. The agent offered her two hundred dollars, and she handed back the lot and took the money, and went home to her dinner. The story has no affidavit attached to it, but it is not an exaggeration of daily occurrences.

In front of San Diego and forming its beautiful harbor lies Coronada Beach, an island of sand, something like two miles long and half a mile broad, with a curved tongue of beach along the Pacific, a superb bathing and driving place. This sand heap had been bought by a company, all staked out in building lots, with shrubs planted at the corners, a shanty or two erected, and from November to March seven

hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of lots had been sold. How much cash had been paid I do not know. The island is reached by a ferry; water has been carried over, a line of railway crosses the island, and on the ocean side, with a beautiful prospect of gray hills framing the bay and the sparkling Pacific, foundations were being laid for a hotel which was to be the largest in the country (the reader understands that everything is the largest and every view is the finest in the world), twice as big as the Raymond at Passadena. The house is to be ready for occupation this winter, and I hear that its rooms are all engaged, and furthermore that the sale of land on the island is already reckoned at over two millions of dollars. A friend of mine, who during the last half dozen years or so has been gradually investing forty or fifty thousand dollars in San Diego lots, told me that they would any day bring half a million. I do not mean to say that everybody in Southern California is rich, — perhaps the majority are having a hard struggle for existence, — but everybody expects to be rich to-morrow. It gives one a feeling of the rapid accumulation of property merely to hear the ordinary conversation. But it is scarcely a restful feeling, and I must confess that for me the atmosphere of this sunny and flowery land

would be more agreeable if I could escape the uneasy sensation that the first duty of man is to buy a lot.

Certainly it was not a restful place. The railways swarmed with excursion trains, the cars were crowded, and it was difficult to get a seat. The towns overflowed with speculators, invalids, and travelers; it was not easy to obtain accommodations in hotels even by applying days in advance. Los Angeles secured temporary relief by getting up a small-pox scare, and hanging out on various houses about town danger flags, and this sent thousands to the neighboring villages. Owing partially to the sudden influx of settlers and visitors, the post-office service was completely demoralized. The government refused to employ clerks enough to do the business; as a consequence the post-offices, as at Los Angeles, were closed more than half the time for assorting and redirecting letters, and during the few open hours long cues of people waited a chance at the windows. It required a long time to procure access to the open office, to register a letter or to inquire for one. By chance a letter might be delivered promptly; by chance it might lie in the office a week. The employees were worked to death. Very soon I gave up all expectation of getting letters with any regularity or

promptness. This was of course largely the fault of the government, — though the closing of the post-offices generally for several hours each day seems a relic of the Spanish-Mexican habit. But the annoyance about the telegraph is due solely to the fact that one company has a monopoly. In New Mexico and Southern California the service was intolerably vexatious. Messages were missent, lost, thrown into the waste-basket, delayed. There was no remedy, little spirit of accommodation, generally carelessness and often insolence in the employees.

Yet the climate remains, with the extraordinary fertility of the irrigated land, the strange beauty of sunny valleys and brown, savage mountain spurs. The beauty of turf, the abundant spontaneous vegetation, and the wonderful wealth of New England landscape in summer it does not approach; but it has a loveliness of its own, partly due to contrast with the surrounding and encroaching desert, but also to the sun, the genial air, and the fruits, flowers, and semi-tropical suggestions of a perpetual summer. The grandiose scenery of the Far West — great wastes, gigantic mountains, fantastic freaks of a nature worn out with age and violence — reminds one of Spain. Southern California, with something of this character, has a softer attractiveness,

and the inhabitants like to say it is Italian. Sierra Madre Villa, nestled amid vineyards and fruit groves on the side of a mountain, with a glimpse of the ocean twenty miles distant, certainly suggests Southern Italy; but no man who has not bought a lot can lay his hand on his heart, and say that there is here the picturesqueness of the Sorrentine promontory, or the atmospheric color. The region should be content to be its glorious self, and unlike any other part of the United States.

I should think that the camel would become this landscape, and I know that the ostrich looks more or less at home. I saw an ostrich farm, where the birds lay eggs at a dollar and a half apiece, and shed plumes at a reasonable price, with no improvement to their appearance. The ostrich is an interesting animal, with his exaggerated, stately strut, his long snake-like neck, the head carried haughtily and parallel with the ground, the big, supercilious eyes looking straight along the flat, soft bill. A procession of these birds is even comical. They are denied, apparently, the pleasures of the palate in eating, everything going whole into the best digestive apparatus known to the physiologists. It is a recreation to see one dispose of an orange. It passes easily into the capacious mouth; then the ostrich stretches

and twists the long neck, and the round fruit is traceable, slowly making its way down, round and round, a solid lump, until it disappears. If the bird could only taste the fruit in its progress, his capacity of enjoyment would be envied.

Traces of the old Spanish life are rapidly disappearing, but may still be seen at such a ranch and hacienda as that of Comulos (the scene of Ramona), and lingering still in Santa Barbara. At this place, besides a few dwellings in the Spanish style, exists a refined Spanish society. Santa Barbara, lying in a valley opening southward to the Pacific, with nooks and cañons among the hills, of wild and almost incomparable beauty, does strongly suggest a sort of Italy. The character and color of the great mountain that shuts it in on the left hand, looking seaward, are very Italian. The railway has not yet reached it, and the situation, the air, the equable climate, — genial in winter and not too warm in summer, — something reposeful and secluded, gave me great content to be there. As I think of it with longing, at the approach here of snow and storm, I cannot but regret that so many days and deserts lie between it and the East.

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